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Welcome
Spring is here, and so is the Welcome to Bavaria special edition! Primarily designed for newcomers, the edition contains information on programs, resources and upcoming events in your community you won’t want to miss. Also get the inside scoop on local places to shop, travel and eat. Copies are available at ACS and through unit representatives.

Strength in Diversity
Two Soldiers with different experiences embody Army-strong values. See page 6.

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Costner delivers

“I have played warriors, but I never forget I’m not one.” - Kevin Costner

Story and photos by
MOLLY HAYDEN
Bavarian News

The military community has a knack for punctuality. Soldiers and family members understand what it means to be on time. And when you throw Kevin Costner into the mix, they may even show up an hour early.

“I had to get this spot,” said family member Amanda Durbin, standing at the front of the line to meet Costner, March 20. “I need Kevin Costner’s autograph, he’s one of my favorite stars.”

Best known as an actor, director and producer, Costner has starred in many movies, including *The Bodyguard*, *Field of Dreams*, *Dances with Wolves* and *Waterworld*. However, Costner recently found himself in Germany pursuing his own field of dreams – music. Having stepped into the musical limelight in 2008 with his band, Kevin Costner and Modern West, Costner writes cowboy lyrics and good ole American rock.

Currently touring Europe to promote the band’s second album “Turn in on,” Costner and his band added the last-minute free performance for Soldiers and family members in Grafenwoehr.

Although he was only able to play one military show while more than “3,000 miles from Graceland,” Costner expressed the band’s desire to break from its overseas tour schedule to perform the exclusive concert for the Army community.

“This is our day off,” said Costner. “But I knew I wasn’t going to feel

good unless we played (for the Soldiers).”

After a call to the United Service Organizations (USO) stating the band’s interest in performing, the concert was put together in mere weeks.

For Spc. David Hayward, 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, Costner’s efforts did not go unnoticed.

“I know he’s on a tight schedule, but he still made time and effort to be here,” said Hayward. “It’s good for the morale of the Soldiers and it shows they support us.” Prior to the concert, Costner arrived to the Main Post USO and came face-to-face with more than 200 Soldiers and family members, shaking hands, signing autographs and exchanging small talk.

An improvisational jam session broke up the signing as Costner and his band grabbed their instruments and played a short acoustic set.

See COSTNER, page 21



Right: Actor/ Musician Kevin Costner takes the stage at the Main Post Field House. Left: Kevin Costner and Modern West perform a short, acoustic jam during the autograph signing at Grafenwoehr’s USO, March 20. More than 200 Soldiers and family members attended the event.

172nd’s Palmer leads from the front

by **BILL ROCHE**
U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs

HEIDELBERG, Germany – A U.S. Army Europe junior officer has been selected from among thousands of his peers to receive a 2009 Army-level Gen. Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award.

Capt. Timothy Palmer of the 172nd Infantry Brigade, based in Schweinfurt, Germany, was one of three U.S. Army Europe officers selected for US-AREUR-level recognition last month, making him eligible for competition at the Army level. At the time of his selection Palmer was commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment.

Earning a MacArthur Award places Palmer in a select group of Army leaders. About 2,500 commissioned and warrant officers across Europe were potential candidates for this year’s US-AREUR level awards, explained Steve Cormier, the project officer

See PALMER, page 21



Palmer

NSPS is on its last legs

by **ELAINE WILSON**
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – The Defense Department is on track to transition the majority of its more than 220,000 civilian employees out of the National Security Personnel System by Sept. 30, more than a year ahead of deadline, the official heading up that transition said, recently.

The 2010 National Defense Authorization Act called for the termination of NSPS by January 2012, bringing an end to a controversial personnel system that’s been operational for less than four years.

The majority of employees will transition – starting this spring – back to the decades-old General Schedule system, but with an assurance in regard to pay.

“I am committed to ensure, as directed in the National Defense Authorization Act, that employees experience no loss of, or decrease in, pay upon conversion,” said John James Jr., director of the Pentagon’s NSPS transition office. “The department believes in that and believes it is the right thing to do.”

This preservation of pay encompasses all employees. For instance, NSPS employees who are

See NSPS, page 21

GAT survey deadline is approaching

Commanders have until May 31 to ensure Soldiers complete survey

by **ALEXANDRA HEMMERLY-BROWN**
Army News Service

WASHINGTON – The deadline is approaching for Soldiers to complete the Global Assessment Tool, part of a new Armywide holistic initiative focused on building resilience: Comprehensive Soldier Fitness.

By May 31, commanders must ensure all Soldiers have completed the mandatory, confidential 240-question survey, Army officials said.

Incorporating physical, emotional, social, family and spiritual strength, Comprehensive Soldier Fitness was created to enhance performance and build Soldiers’ resilience.

The Global Assessment Tool, or GAT, helps work toward resilient Soldiers by forcing them to take a closer look at their emotional health, and what can be improved on. Defined as the “ability to grow and thrive in the face of challenges and bounce back from adversity,” resilience for Soldiers is essential in an environment of persistent conflict, said Brig. Gen. Rhonda Cornum, director of the CSF program. Traditionally, the Army has invested much into ensuring

troops are physically fit, but this program touches all the dimensions of an individual’s personal development.

“Resilience is the ability to both go through adverse experiences without letting it negatively affect you, and also the ability to bounce back faster,” said Cornum.

And she should know. One of only two female Soldiers taken prisoner during the Persian Gulf War, Cornum survived a helicopter crash and was taken captive to later go on to write a book, become a urologist, earn a Ph.D., and be promoted to the rank of general.

Cornum stressed that not every Soldier is the same; each has unique experiences and needs. She gave the example of a tennis ball. Most tennis balls when thrown against a wall will bounce back, Cornum explained. But some, if they are low on air, or have been left outside in the weather, won’t. CSF is geared toward giving Soldiers as much “bounce” as possible, she said.

“We are giving everybody the opportunity to realize their maximum potential,” Cornum explained.

Also tied into CSF is the Master Resilience Trainer program. Currently housed at the University of Pennsylvania, plans are underway to begin a branch of the school at Fort Jackson, S.C., in April and eventually move the course to

See SURVEY, page 21

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE



German partners make community strong

Last week we hosted more than 60 German officials and some German media. We regularly host events as a way to keep our German partners informed and let them see firsthand what is actually happening at our installation.

Our Suicide Task Force has made great strides in communicating to our Soldiers that it's OK to seek help, and we (and the Army) have many initiatives underway involving behavioral health and other programs such as Comprehensive Soldier Fitness. We wanted to share the details of our messages and programs with local German elected officials, health care administrators, clergy and German Army officers and NCOs so they can better understand the challenges we are facing and how we are meeting these challenges.

Our chaplain discussed with our visitors the various suicide prevention efforts that include everything from unit ministry teams to spiritual, personal and relational and life training. Suicide prevention efforts such as ACE-SI (Act, Care and Escort your Buddy-Suicide Intervention) training and intervention efforts such having a staff duty chaplain available



by phone 24-hours a day at the 475-LIFE telephone number were briefed.

BMEDDAC hosted the visitors at the new mild Traumatic Brain Injury clinic located at Rose Barracks. Staff at the mild Traumatic Brain Injury clinic explained that mild Traumatic Brain Injury should not be confused with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, but is the result of a physical injury. But it was also emphasized that the role of the clinic is also to "treat" family members who may need help in dealing with a Soldier who has suffered a Mild Traumatic Brain Injury.

The groups was briefed about a pilot program called Leadership 360, which teaches various coping skills, or tools, that Soldiers can use and pass on to others in their units. This is a great initiative by our Bavarian MEDDAC that partners with host nation health care to provide alternative treatment techniques to improve Soldier resilience. Many of these skills and tools involve progressive or new ideas, such as the use of yoga and meditation to relieve physical and emotional stress.

Visitors were also given a hands-on demonstration of the equipment used at the clinic, including the driving simulator and other balance-based therapies.

The visit to the MTBI clinic was followed by a briefing regarding behavioral health, which described the full range of services available for Soldiers and families. These include

mental/psychological health services, social work services/family advocacy, Educational and Development Intervention Service (EDIS), and a school-based behavioral health program. Our health care specialists want our German representatives to know how important is to the Army to provide services that specifically address the stress of military life.

But the vital role host nation health care providers play in the Army's overseas behavioral health program was also highlighted. Our German partners are providing us with 24/7 capability, medical referrals for family members, short-term psychiatric stabilization, and performing coordination through BMEDDAC patient liaisons.

Having our German partners visit, see our facilities, and meet and talk to experts and their counterparts is the best way possible to help them explain to others how the Army is taking care of its people and how important host nation support is to us.

Army Strong!

*Col. Chris Sorenson
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

CSM CORNER



Fostering awareness for harrassment, sexual assault everyone's responsibility

Spring is finally here, and like the sun that is slowly melting the last vestiges of winter, I'd like to shed new light to a topic that has been around for a long time: sexual assault.

I really cannot overemphasize the importance of being conscious of and taking action to prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment in our community.

To further amplify this topic, I'm happy to announce the return of the very popular play "Sex Signals," which will be held at both the Rose Barracks and Main Post theaters, April 20.

The play draws attention to and seeks to educate unit leaders and personnel on the signals associated with sexual assault and harassment and recommends ways of engaging and eradicating these negative behaviors from the environment.

In the performance, two actors portray a realistic dating situation about personal boundaries and the line between what could be construed as sexual assault or just a misunderstanding. The audience provides input throughout the play and is ultimately makes the final call on what is appropriate and who crossed



the line. And while I'm on the topic, I would also like to thank Leigh Jones, hip-hop band Animate Objects, the comedians, Soldiers and other performers who were part of the I. A.M. Strong Tour for bringing the message of sexual assault and harassment prevention to our Grafenwoehr community. I thoroughly enjoyed the show and hope you did as well.

Overseas Housing Allowance survey

Another important topic in April is the Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) Utilities and Move-In Housing Allowance (MIHA) Expense Survey for Germany, which will be conducted April 1-30.

Each year, the survey is conducted to get a baseline for how much Soldiers and family members are spending on utilities like trash removal, electricity, heating oil and water. Also, every three years the survey collects information on the amount Soldiers and families put toward making the homes they rent habitable.

For example, it is not uncommon when searching for rental properties in Germany to find an otherwise stellar house without major appliances like a refrigerator or oven. The survey considers the average costs associated with these types of "moving-in" costs and other fees such as the charge for turning on your utilities when you move in.

Your participation and valuable input is key to making this important survey a success. The information you provide for these surveys determines the baseline for how much Soldier and family members receive the following year.

Look for a link to the OHA survey on the U.S. Army Europe Web site, www.hqsareur.army.mil, under the "Hot Topics" section on the right-hand side of the page.

*Command Sgt. Maj.
William Berrios
CSM, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

'Secret' weddings not worth the trouble

JACEY ECKHART

On the Homefront

I don't think Judy Mezzacappo thought I was a reliable character. When Brad and I announced our engagement, my mom's workmate pulled her aside and asked, "What if Jacey sneaks down to Florida and gets married before the wedding?" My mom told me later she just stood there stammering like an idiot. "I just couldn't imagine that you would do that," Mom said. I could.

I could imagine it because I was 21 when I got engaged. I could imagine it because I was so hip-deep in love with Brad that I just wanted to go be with him now and start my real life.

Yet my 22-year old fiancé did not think the idea of a secret wedding was cool, especially when our military friends were getting married and dragging us across country to attend their formal weddings.

I didn't think it through too much at the time. Who does? I was being kissed senseless on a regular basis. Between the kissing and the thousands of dollars of BAH we military couples might take in if we marry in secret a few months before the wedding, is it any wonder that our logic can get a little fuzzy?

When it comes to military life, someone really needs to tell new couples to think this thing all the way through to the bitter end.

Ain't worth it. I say that because when you think this through, you have to know that in military life "secret" and "marriage" should never be mentioned in the same sentence.

For new military couples, we don't always get the idea that the military is more than just a job our mates do. It is a culture we marry into, a special set of demands. One of the best ways to handle those demands is to have a relationship marked by absolute trust. Ask anyone whose service member is deployed what trust means to them both.

Refusing to marry in secret, no matter how hard it is, is actually good practice for your real life - your real military life. Honor your marriage so much that you would never lie about it from beginning to end. And that will keep you a lot closer than money ever could.

Panel of peers delivers verdict at courts-martial

JMTC OFFICE OF THE STAFF JUDGE ADVOCATE

News Release

At a General Court-Martial convened in Vilseck, Germany, Jan. 27, Spc. Jayson A. Graves, L Troop, 4th Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, plead guilty by exceptions to five specifications of possession of child pornography, in violation of Article 134, of the UCMJ. Graves plead guilty to the possession being conduct of a nature to bring discredit upon the armed forces, but not prejudicial to good order and discipline. The military judge found the accused guilty of the excepted language, and thus found the accused guilty of all five specifications as they were originally charged. The judge sentenced Graves as to be confined for seven months, to be reduced to the grade of private (E1), and to be discharged from the service with a bad conduct discharge.

At a General Court-Martial convened in Vilseck, Germany, Feb. 4, Sgt. 1st Class Robert Trent Johnson, Delta Company, 3-159th Regiment, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, plead guilty to one specification of Article 92 (violation of Multinational Corps Iraq, General Order number 1) and three specifications of Article 134 (possession of child pornography). The military judge sentenced

Johnson to be reduced to the grade of sergeant (E5) and to be confined for 15 months.

At a General Court-Martial convened in Vilseck, Germany, Feb. 18, Pvt. Bryan D. Santizo, HHC, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, (Rear) (Provisional), plead guilty to one specification of Article 80 (attempted distribution of MDMA), one specification of Article 81 (conspiracy to distribute MDMA), and two specifications of Article 112a (MDMA and marijuana use). The military judge also found him guilty of aggravated sexual assault (Article 120) at a contested court martial on the charge to which Santizo plead not guilty. The judge sentenced Santizo to a bad conduct discharge, forfeiture of \$1,000 for 12 months, and confinement for 26 months.

At a General Court-Martial convened in Bamberg, Germany, Feb. 26, Spc. Alnabil G. Aming, 240th Quartermaster Company, 391st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, plead not guilty to one specification of aggravated sexual assault and one specification of abusive sexual contact (Article 120), one specification of adultery (Article 134), and one specification of false official statement (Article 107) at a contested court martial. An enlisted panel acquitted Aming of abusive sexual contact, and found him guilty of wrongful sexual contact (a lesser included offense

of aggravated sexual assault), adultery and false official statement. The enlisted panel sentenced Aming to three months confinement and reduction to private (E1).

At a General Court-Martial convened in Vilseck, Germany, March 4, Staff Sgt. Dean B. Bah-Massey, HHC, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, plead not guilty to one specification of Article 120, aggravated sexual assault, for having sexual intercourse with a woman when she was substantially incapacitated. He was also charged with one specification of Article 107, false official statement, for denying having sex with the woman. An enlisted panel acquitted Bah-Massey of one violation of aggravated sexual assault, and convicted him of one violation of false official statement. The enlisted panel sentenced him to 60 days of restriction and hard labor, without confinement, to forfeiture of \$500 per month for 18 months, and to be reprimanded.

At a Special Court-Martial convened in Vilseck, Germany, March 11, Spc. Simeon B. Bradley, Medical Troop, Regimental Support Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, was tried by an enlisted panel. Bradley was charged with one specification of violating Article 134 of the UCMJ, negligent homicide, for his involvement in a fatal traffic accident. Bradley was acquitted of the charge.

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Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch

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I. A.M. Strong concert rocks the house



Photo by Trecia A. Wilson

Sgt. Anthony Profit, Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers, or BOSS, vice-president at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, entertained the crowd with rap poetry.

Left: Recording artist Leigh Jones and back-up singer Lakeisha Taylor-former American Idol contestant-sign autographs for Soldiers, March 19, at the Grafenwoehr main dining facility.

Photo by Molly Hayden

Jones uses musical talents to spread important message

by **TRECIA A. WILSON**
Assistant Editor

Intervene. Act. Motivate.

These are the words which complete the acronym I. A.M. Strong and are the steps every one of us has the responsibility to take when we see our fellow Soldiers and military family being sexually assaulted or harassed.

Musician Leigh Jones and her

entourage shared that message with the Grafenwoehr community, March 19.

Comedian Jay Black opened the show and really had the crowd in stitches with his self-deprecating humor.

The crowd was reeled back into the seriousness of the night’s intent with the words of Sgt. Anthony Profit, Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers, or BOSS, vice-president at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Profit’s rap poetry invoked images of the effects this crime has on a Soldier and how it could be the ruination of that Soldier’s life. They illustrate further how



Photo by Trecia A. Wilson

Leigh Jones croons a ballad to an audience of more than 200 Soldiers, family members and civilians at the Grafenwoehr Performing Arts Center, March 19.

the effectiveness of the Army is undermined when a Soldier cannot rely on his or her brothers and sisters in arms because of that event.

Fellow Soldier Sgt. Danny “BEE” Bullock, a rap/DJ artist from the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade stationed in Ansbach, Germany, followed Profit with his own rap interpretation of the I. A.M. Strong message.

The audience was also treated to the hip-hop sounds of Chicago-based group, Animate Objects.

The musical headliner of the evening was Leigh Jones, a rhythm and blues singer from Los Angeles.

Jones said she loves Soldiers and was extremely happy to be able to perform for them because of all they do for our country.

Backing up Jones was former American Idol contestant Lakeisha Taylor, who rocked the house with songs by Gladys Knight and more.

“The show was a great venue for the message that was being delivered,” said Naydy Perez, who came with her entire family. “Sexual harassment and sexual assault are factors that can contribute to the failure of any organization if awareness and training are not provided.”

Children report horrors of World War II

by **TRECIA A. WILSON**
Assistant Editor

Upon entering, there are uniformed Nazi guards with weapons pacing back and forth as they stand watch over shabbily dressed children, some washing walls, others on their knees scrubbing floors.

The room is sparse, just a wood crate here and there. A small desk and two bunk beds of rough worn timber. A train whistle echoes in the distance. Several children file onto the stage stating their names, ages and the bunk number they live in.

It’s 1942 and the children are Czechoslovakian Jews who have been separated from their families and forced to live in the Terezin, a Nazi concentration camp not far from Prague, Czechoslovakia. Although not a death camp like Auschwitz, still more than 35,000 people died there.



Photo illustration by Marina Acosta-Miller

This image is just part of a slide show of the actors of “And a Child Shall Lead” being performed April 1-3 at Grafenwoehr Performing Arts Center.

audience should be on guard. Their portrayal of these trapped children will evoke deep emotions about the atrocities they endured. Each of them has researched the topic they are with the audience and since most of them have parents who are Soldiers, they have a greater understanding of the issues of war than average children their age.

Their poetry and music is taken from actual words and songs written by children in the camp from 1942-1945. Children who chose to express their thoughts and fears.

Here is small taste of the depth these children shared:

Toward a glimmer of light
In the dark, dark night,
We shall lead,
We shall lead the way.
We pray for peace with all our might
But we’re not afraid to fight

Our spirits are high
No more standing by
We shall lead
We shall lead the way
When the battle is done
We shall sing as one
We shall lead
We shall lead the way.

Throughout the play, the audience hears prose, music and clippings from the original “Vedem,” a publication written and produced by the youth in the boys barracks of the Terezin Concentration Camp.

“And a Child Shall Lead,” opens a window to an era and shows the audience the thoughts and fears of the many children who died there or the few who survived. The final performances are April 1-3. Doors open at 6:30 pm. Tickets can be purchased at the door prior to show time. For more, call DSN 475-6426, CIV 09641-83-6426.

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Veterans of Foreign Wars sends Easter Bunny to Czech orphans

Story and photo by
NICK D’AMARIO
USAG Grafenwoehr Public Affairs

Though only six adults made the long trip from Grafenwoehr to the Detsky Domov orphanage in Most, Czech Republic, for the Vilseck VFW Post 9334 hosted 17th Annual Easter Egg Hunt, they represented the good wishes and kindness of thousands of Soldiers, family members and civilians.

Laden with 600 Easter eggs, bags of school supplies and other gifts donated by individuals and organizations within U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr, the well wishers brought the spirit of Easter to less fortunate children of Most.

The Easter Egg Hunt was first organized in 1993 by James Dicks, currently junior vice commander of Vilseck VFW Post 9334, as the first of its kind in the Czech Republic. Even after 17 years, both Czech children and adults have some trouble getting their arms around the concept of the Easter Bunny and the egg hunt, but they immediately warmed to the spirit of the occasion with expressions of glee when they saw the Easter Bunny (played by Brigitte McGuire) roll in with a large basket chock-full of bright, colorful eggs.

Wet and spotty weather kept the event indoors, with the Easter Bunny leading the visiting troupe through each of the many orphanage day rooms where groups of six to eight children awaited treats and gifts.

In between each day room McGuire, in the true spirit of the Easter Egg Hunt, methodically hid eggs on shelving, in potted plants and other places that promised to make the Easter Egg Hunt remain true to its calling well after her departure.

This was McGuire’s second year playing the Easter Bunny, and she has also been a staunch supporter of the annual Christmas program in Most sponsored by the VFW.

“I love to see children happy. Their circumstance needs enlightenment, and I’m thrilled to help any way I can,” said McGuire.

Dicks makes numerous trips to Most every year, tirelessly devoted to helping the orphans any way he can.

“The children aren’t blessed with parents, and I enjoy giving them a joy they would not otherwise experience. It’s from the heart and for humanitarian reasons,” said Dicks.

Martin Sands of VFW Post 9334, who has also played Santa Claus for the Detsky Domov Christmas program, said “being in the VFW



James Dicks, the founding VFW member of the annual Easter Egg Hunt in Most, Czech Republic, watches as the Easter Bunny (Brigitte McGuire) hands out eggs filled with candy and small toys to Czech orphans. Isabella Burns, 3, daughter of Staff Sgt. Justen Burns, sits on the Easter Bunny's lap.

is a fantastic conduit for supporting those less fortunate.”

Three Soldiers also made the trip, Spc. Chris Reigstad of 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment; Staff Sgt. Justen Burns of the Warrior Transition Unit Cadre (with his daughter, Isabella, age 3); and Capt. David Matheson, Vilseck WTU

commander.

“The WTU has a lot of resources, with so much given to us by the community and other organizations,” said Matheson. “And for our WTU Soldiers, this is a wonderful opportunity to give something to someone else, thus giving us even more in return.”

CDC receives national accreditation

by **ANITA PAYNE-LANDGRAF**
Child, Youth & School Services

Since 1985, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has offered a national, voluntary accreditation system to set professional standards for early childhood education programs, and to help families identify high-quality programs. Today, NAEYC Accreditation represents the mark of quality in early childhood education. Over 7,000 child care programs, preschools, early learning centers and other center- or school-based early childhood education programs are NAEYC-Accredited. The Department of Defense Child Development programs have been lauded as the model for the nation, with 100 percent of Army Child Development centers accredited.

In March, the Rose Barracks Child Development Center was awarded accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Although the center has been accredited since 1995, the process changed in 2007, making the 400-plus criteria more difficult to meet and maintain.

NAEYC accreditation is a team effort, requiring the participation of every staff member. Despite on-going deployments, the Rose Barracks

CDC staff worked extra hours for over 18 months to achieve their goal. During that time, over 85 percent of the direct care staff had a spouse in the deployment cycle.

“We could not have done this without the staff and the support of their family members”, said, Hilsy Gomez, acting director of the Rose Barracks CDC. “The staff worked on weekends stayed late during the week and formed a team that made the entire Rose Barracks CDC stronger. They should all be very proud of receiving the accreditation.”

To achieve NAEYC Accreditation, the Rose Barracks CDC staff completed an extensive self-study process, which measured the program and its services against 10 NAEYC early childhood program standards and more than 400 related accreditation criteria. Accreditation criterion goes beyond basic health and safety standards and measures compliance in areas such as child assessment, curriculum, and leadership and community partnerships. The self-study process was validated by a site visit by a professional assessor.

NAEYC-accredited programs are subject to unannounced visits after the accreditation is awarded, to ensure that quality programs are maintained. All eligible Child Development Centers in the Grafenwoehr Military Community are accredited by NAEYC.

Grafenwoehr community top responders in IMCOM’s Customer Service Assessment

by **LISA LALIBERTE**
Customer Management Service

U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr released the results for the IMCOM 2009 Customer Service Assessment, recently.

More than 35,000 Soldiers, family members, civilians, retirees, veterans and contractors from CONUS and OCONUS participated in the assessment. Out of a total of 2,103 responses from Europe, 657 were from Grafenwoehr, which was the most in Europe.

The preferred form of communication for the 2009 report was by e-mail, newsletter and community updates, with 28 percent of customers using these sources. The 2008 report reflected the same preferred method to communicate the survey. The installation newspaper and installation Web site also rated high for communicating the survey to customers.

The assessment is a Web-based tool that allows IMCOM individuals to rate garrison services in performance and importance. The feedback helps answer whether our efforts to deliver quality services are making

a difference and meeting customer expectations. The garrison identified areas that are performing well and are important to customers, including mail, outdoor recreation and fire and emergency services. Services that performed lower than customer’s expectations were Army Family Housing and Child and Youth Services. Bowling and arts & crafts exceeded customers’ expectations.

“With these results, the survey, along with the Army Family Covenant and other community surveys, provides the garrison with a well-rounded view. By using surveys, along with ICE Web site, together they provide the best to this unique community,” said Col. Chris Sorenson, commander, USAG Grafenwoehr.

This survey is a part of the Customer Service Management program, which is a three-tier program that provides a voice to the customer. ICE, or Interactive Customer Evaluation, is another tier of the program that provides customers the ability to make comments each day via the Web site <https://ice.disa.mil> or comment cards throughout the garrison.

The next survey will be conducted in 2010.

Spotlight on Education



Name: Nancy Carillo
Hometown: Valinda, Calif.
What grade and subjects do you teach? I’m an Education Technologist.
How long have you been a teacher? 26 years.
What do you enjoy most about teaching? I enjoy the kids the best. Rainbow has the greatest kids.
What advice can you give students to help them succeed? Always try your hardest, and never give up!

Army in Europe census data provided by DoD

by **BRUCE ANDERSON**
USAREUR Public Affairs

HEIDELBERG, Germany - U.S. Army in Europe Soldiers, federal civilian employees and dependent family members will be counted in the upcoming 2010 Census – without filling out a census form.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau Web site, federal government departments and agencies, including the Department of Defense, are required to provide a certified count of those stationed or deployed by the department overseas.

The DoD’s Defense Manpower Data Center will provide the count based on home of record, legal residence, or last duty station, in that order.

National Guard members serving overseas as of April 1, 2010, are also included in the overseas count. DoD contractors are not included in the count.

Service members and family members living in the U.S. during the census are required to fill out a census form. They should not include those serving overseas in their household count.

According to a March 22 Armed Forces Press Service article, census information primarily is used to reapportion the number of seats allotted to each state in the House of Representatives. The government also draws on the data to distribute about \$400 billion in aid for programs such as Medicaid. States use the records to determine how to allocate funds to cities and neighborhoods for critical projects such as infrastructure, hospitals and schools.

For more information, visit the Census Bureau’s Web site www.census.gov

Strength in Diversity

Small town roots shape NCO

Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class TYRONE WALKER
JMRC Public Affairs

When he was fresh out of a small, Louisiana high school, Matthew Black left home to join the Army. In addition to his desire to see the world, he wanted to grow as a person and improve himself.

“I wanted something more. I felt I could get it in the Army,” Black said.

Nearly 16 years later, the 34-year-old Sgt. 1st Class Black, a veteran with 27 months in a combat zone, serves as the motor pool sergeant responsible for keeping hundreds of mission-essential vehicles operational for observer/controllers to use during training rotations at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, one of the U.S. Army’s premier maneuver and training areas in Europe.

At the age of 18, Black, a native of Ponchatoula, La., a small farming town of less than 10,000 people, which is located half way between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, left home. But, he says it’s the lessons he learned growing up in the town known as the “strawberry capital of the world” because of its annual strawberry festival that attracts more than 200,000 people, that have guided his life and work ethic.

Made up of strawberry farmers, commercial fishermen and offshore construction workers, Ponchatoula, Black said, is a place where people work hard but don’t complain about it.

The bedrock of the community is people like Black’s father, a truck driver who has worked the same job with the same company for 30 years. Black’s mentor is his father, the one person from whom Black draws his work ethic and sense of loyalty.

“I watched my father walk out of the door everyday no matter what – sick, tired, sometimes hurting, but he went to work every day to provide for his family,” Black said. “No



Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Black, a veteran with more than two years serving in a combat zone, works as a motorpool sergeant of the Recovery and Maintenance section at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center.

matter how tough things got, that company was always there for him, and he maintained that loyalty to the company.”

Black is the motor sergeant of the Recovery and Maintenance Support Section that oversees 427 vehicles at JMRC. He also coaches, teaches and mentors 28 Soldiers, and provides support to their family members.

Taking a cue from his father, Black has developed a sense of loyalty to the Army that permeates his own military work ethic.

“If you’re going to do something, don’t do it half way. Complete it. Give it your best. Give

it 100 percent every day and it comes back to you,” he said.

Loyalty and giving his best are the forces that make it easy for Black to get up every day and strap on his boots. He treats each day as a new opportunity and every assignment as a new challenge and learning experience. That outlook is what Black emphasizes to his Soldiers.

“If an (observer/controller) team losses coverage because of a maintenance deficiency, the unit that came here to get real-world training loses out,” Black said.

New Soldier becomes Bravo’s ‘go-to’ guy

Story and photo by
Pfc. BETHANY L. LITTLE
172nd Infantry Brigade

Fresh out of basic combat training with an eager heart, Pfc. Mitchell Hinz, a Bradley Fighting Vehicle System maintainer, Bravo Maintenance, 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, is learning the ropes of the newly redeployed 172nd Infantry Brigade.

The former certified Hewlett-Packard Company computer technician joined the Army less than a year ago.

“I wanted to do something different with my life and serve my country,” said Hinz.

Hinz is the first person in his family to serve in the military since World War II. One of his grandfathers fought in World War II and the other served in the Navy. Prior to World War II, Hinz’s family emigrated from Germany to the United States.

“I would like to find out where exactly my family is from while I’m stationed here,” said Hinz. “I’d like to trace back my family tree and see if I’m related to anyone still here in

Germany.”

Hinz arrived in Germany in November 2009, just in time to greet his new battalion as it returned from a yearlong deployment to Iraq.

With what little time Hinz has spent in 2-28th Inf. Regt., he has already proven himself as the “go-to guy,” said Sgt. Devan Reece, shop foreman, Bravo Maintenance, 2-28th Inf. Regt.

“In the three weeks he’s been in our section, he has proven to us that he is a very disciplined, motivated and respectful Soldier,” said Reece.

“I’m really just doing my job,” said Hinz, humbly. “I do what I’m told, when I’m told and do it to the best of my ability.”

Although Hinz did not deploy with his unit in the recent tour in Iraq, he has already earned the respect of his shop.

“We selected Hinz, as the only new Soldier, for a couple of maintenance schools such as the Light Wheel Vehicle Troubleshooting and Repair course and the Standard Army Maintenance System course,” said Reece.

“Hinz is a self-starter with a lot of initiative. I fully expect to see him fast track through his career,” added Reece.



Pfc. Mitchell Hinz, a Bradley Fighting Vehicle System Maintainer, Bravo Maintenance, 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, works on an Army M-939 5-ton truck during a routine pre-inspection check.

Garrison focuses on its energy consumption

Small steps toward energy efficiency make a big difference in community resources

by **AREF ARIANTA**
USAG Grafenwoehr Energy Office

In the past, community members may have heard a lot about energy conservation and the need to collectively change energy use practices to save the garrison’s energy costs. The garrison is mandated by a myriad of federal and Army directives and regulations to reduce energy consumption to save costs.

Installation Management Command Headquarters recently tasked SAIN Engineering Associates to perform an energy audit of our buildings on the Main Post and Rose Barracks, March 1-5.

The audit surveyed buildings for technical efficiencies and observed the garrison’s workforce and residents’ energy consumption practices. Typical buildings, including family housing, administrative, aircraft hangars, motor pools, and maintenance activities, were surveyed. The team provided recommendations on how the garrison as a whole can use energy more efficiently.

Although the outcome of the audit will be published in a final report, SAIN Engineer Associates made several recommendations to garrison leadership.

Leaving lights on in unoccupied facilities was a large concern. Especially in maintenance facilities and motor pools where the high-

intensity lighting is intended to provide work area illumination. These areas often have separate safety and desktop lighting and users should turn off those large electricity consuming lights when they are not performing maintenance work. Using natural lighting during the day is one alternative.

Another potential energy waste situation was leaving doors and windows open while the heat is on.

No one knows their activity better than its workers. Workers can submit a work order to DPW to either tailor the heating switch to the door position or install an additional PVC strip curtain, if necessary.

Excessive night lighting and unnecessary outside lights put a large burden on energy bill. Everyone can make a difference by fighting those energy vampires.

Users should be more aware of their energy consumption and others’ habits in their surroundings, and even discuss those habits with their peers and family members.

Increased consciousness of energy consumption will help U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr use its energy more efficiently and enable it to put that money toward other important programs and services.

To make suggestions or learn more, contact the Grafenwoehr Energy Office at DSN 475-7170, CIV 09641-83-7170.

Editor’s Note: Aref Arianta is USAG Grafenwoehr’s energy manager.



Photo by Audrey Glynn

Bill Bewley, president of the 2nd Cavalry Association, left, talks with Lt. Col. Andrew Greene, 4th Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment commander, during the unit’s Mission Rehearsal Exercise in Hohenfels.

Association lends support to 2SCR troopers

The 2nd Cavalry Association president visits Soldiers during training exercise to build rapport, provide resources

by **Spc. JERRY WILSON**
2SCR Public Affairs

Troopers from the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment received a visit from a very special guest, recently, as they geared up for their deployment to Afghanistan during a mission rehearsal exercise at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, in Hohenfels, Germany.

Retired Lt. Col. William “Bill” Bewley, president of the 2nd Cavalry Association, spent several days talking with Soldiers in the field and observing the extensive training.

Established in 1889, the 2nd Cavalry Association is a private organization of individuals who have served with the regiment.

The association has the distinction of being the first and oldest veterans organization established around a particular unit. It is dedicated to preserving the regiment’s rich history and helping Soldiers currently serving in any way it can.

“It’s an honor and a privilege to represent all the cavalry Soldiers, past and present, and hopefully future,” said Bewley. “My purpose here is to represent that heritage and legacy for those troopers and to be with the regiment in person before they deploy to Afghanistan.”

Bewley said his primary mission in visiting the Dragoons was one of support.

“I want them to know that they represent our great nation in a very meaningful mission,” he said. “The members of the regiment past are very proud of them and that we are intensely pleased that they are going to go over there prepared.

We, the serving members of the association, are with them, pray for them, and wish them Godspeed and a safe return as they fight this fight.”

For Bewley, returning to Hohenfels was like a homecoming and brought back many memories for the 21-year veteran.

“I sat right over there in that motor pool for the first time in 1969,” he said. “It feels great to be back, it all brings back such positive memories.”

Watching the Dragoons in action, Bewley admitted a lot has changed since he last donned the uniform.

“The Army was very different from what it is now,” he said. “We are a much more capable force now, the discipline is better.”

Bewley visited each squadron and let Soldiers know the association has been and will continue to be there for all Dragoons, past and present. He touched on two programs in particular: education and wounded warriors.

“We provide scholarships for active Soldiers, their children or grandchild of an association member,” he said. “We award one 2,500-dollar scholarship a year.”

“We have the wounded warrior program in which we are the liaison for the regiment with the guys who are taken to Walter Reed and at the Burn Center in San Antonio.”

Bewley said he plans on returning to Germany for the regiment’s welcome home ceremony, and urged Soldiers to become members of the association.

“Being a part of the association is not just about what trinket I can give you to hang on your wall,” he said. “It’s just being a part of something that’s special.”

Run across Germany comes to Hohenfels



The day after he ran 34 miles from Vilseck to Hohenfels, Paul Staso sets off on another 32-mile run from Hohenfels to Allersberg, March 10, after speaking with students at Hohenfels Elementary. Staso is running more than 500 miles by himself across Germany to encourage children to become physically active and to inspire them to achieve their goals. Students can follow Staso through his online classroom at www.pacetrekk.com.

Story and photo by
by **KRISTIN BRADLEY**
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

If the thought of driving between Hohenfels and Vilseck is one you slightly dread, imagine running that same distance in the cold Bavarian wind.

It is hard to fathom, but that is just what Paul Staso did – he ran 34 miles from Vilseck to Hohenfels, March 9, to wake up the next morning, hold an assembly at Hohenfels Elementary School and set off on another 32-mile journey to Allersberg.

With only his 80-pound stroller, B.O.B. (Beast of Burden), that holds his gear to keep him company, Staso is running more than 500 miles across Germany by himself to encourage young people to stay fit and accomplish their goals.

Staso is the founder and president of the Promoting Active Children Everywhere Fitness Foundation, an organization he founded in response to a challenge he made with elementary school students in his hometown. To encourage the students to become more active, Staso told them if they could complete a 3,200-mile virtual run across America, he would do it for real. The children completed their end of the bargain and in the summer of 2006 Staso ran 3,260 miles from Oregon to Delaware in 108 days.

His journey didn't end in Delaware

though: in 2008 he ran across Montana in 20 days and in 2009 he ran across Alaska in 18 days, all while bringing students with him through his blog and the virtual classroom on his Web site, www.pacetrekk.com. Now he is tackling Germany.

"The Germany challenge, called PACE Trek 2010, is my way of trying to make an impact in the decline of youth health and fitness," Staso said. "The trek through Germany will require me to average nearly a marathon per day for 21 days. I'll be virtually traveling with teams of school children from across the U.S.A. as well as many other countries as they access my online classroom and learn about the locations we're trekking through via my writings, pictures and media files."

For his 2010 trek, 177 teams from nine countries, more than 22,000 students, are signed up via his Web site to follow Staso and run with him.

In Germany 25 teams, including Hohenfels Elementary and Hohenfels Middle/High School, are following his journey.

Staso said the idea for his first trek outside the United States began when teachers from Department of Defense Dependents Schools contacted him about a run across Germany. He said throughout his journey he plans to stop at as many DoDDs schools as possible to speak to children about staying physically active.

"DoDDs schools have shown a lot of enthusiasm for PACE over the past two years and I'm honored to have an opportunity to run through Germany and give assemblies at as many DoDDs schools as possible," Staso said. "It's a treat for me. Their parents are here making a sacrifice. It's great to be able to see what their lives are like."

Staso said his hope, no matter what school he is visiting, is to inspire children to take care of their bodies through fitness and their minds through setting and achieving goals.

"Kids need to see that if you take care of your body it can take you on some wonderful adventures, far more satisfying than staring at a television or computer for hours on end," said Staso.

During his visit at Hohenfels Elementary, Staso told students about the challenges he endured on his run across America as he encouraged them to reach their goals.

"There will always be people that won't always buy into what you want to do, but you've got to keep going for it anyway. Sometimes when you have a goal, you have to work through those days that are really tough," Staso said.

"If you take care of it (your body) and what you put into it and what you do with it, it is going to help you succeed so much better with what you want to do, no matter what your goal is."

Afghan National Army leaders visit JMRC

Story and photo by
by **Sgt. DAVID TURNER**

214th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

"We have a saying in Afghanistan, 'When you succeed in education, you succeed in the future,'" said the Afghan National Army officer in charge of training all ANA soldiers, speaking through an interpreter. "As a rule, when teams or groups go into battle, they must have training and education."

Brig. Gen. Gul Hamisha Gul Pashton and three members of his staff met with U.S. Army trainers and members of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, March 6, to participate in predeployment training exercises.

Gul and his staff are helping the 2SCR to better partner with their ANA counterparts when they deploy to Afghanistan in the coming months by playing the part of ANA staff in the regiment's training exercises at JMRC.

Besides acting as a corps-level staff, the Afghan officers' goal is to evaluate training partnerships at JMRC and observe how multinational troops train for counterinsurgency operations.

Gul will soon be taking command of the Afghan National Army Training Command, which trains all ANA forces in Afghanistan.

Lt. Col. Christopher Doneski, a JMRC deputy senior brigade trainer, said JMRC now focuses mostly on training troops deploying to Afghanistan and plans to integrate more ANA soldiers into future training, both for their benefit and that of other multinational troops.

This is not the first time ANA soldiers have trained at JMRC before going back to Afghanistan, said Gul.

"The battalions we have sent here before to Hohenfels have taken good experience and training back, and they agree with all of the training," said Gul. "So in the future, we plan



Col. John Spiszer, Joint Multinational Readiness Center commander, greets Brig. Gen. Gul Hamisha Gul Pashton, a representative of the Afghan National Army, at JMRC, March 6. Gen. Gul and his staff participated in predeployment exercises with the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment to better prepare them for partnering with their Afghan counterparts.

to send more."

"As new as the Afghan Army is, and as they are continuing to grow, it's valuable working with partner forces on both sides," said Doneski, who works with the 2nd SCR's command staff. "They understand how to work with us, and we have a better understanding with them before we get into country, so the learning curve is not as steep."

Having ANA advisers as part of their training exercises is a useful tool for the 2SCR, Doneski said, since these are the same soldiers they will be working with in Afghanistan. The ANA can

also teach the 2SCR troops some lessons they will be able to use, he said.

"It's invaluable ... to understand the culture, their military culture, their capabilities and limitations, so when we work together, we mitigate each other's limitations and we capitalize on each other's strengths," he said. "The Afghans are far better at going into a town and understanding the atmospherics. Their sense of what is normal is far better than ours, just understanding the culture and being from that culture."

"Soldiers must prepare to respect the local

people of Afghanistan," said Gul, "and so this training is good for them."

During the regiment's time here, the entire JMRC training area has been transformed into a miniature version of Kandahar province, complete with Afghan towns and villages, with trainers playing the part of local citizens, government officials, and sometimes as Taliban insurgents. It's all designed to help the 2SCR to "train as they fight."

According to Doneski, this level of realism in training not only prepares Soldiers how to react to ambushes, improvised explosive devices and other threats, it also prepares them for the more difficult task of counterinsurgency operations. In living close to a civilian population, these Soldiers will work with local citizens, provincial reconstruction teams and their Afghan security forces counterparts to protect the population and bring stability to their piece of the battle space. Working with Afghan soldiers is just another piece of the scenario, said Doneski.

"The way we replicate," he said, referring to the simulated battlefield conditions and the operations the Soldiers conduct, "is they have to partner."

Doneski, an Operation Enduring Freedom veteran from Bethesda, Md., said feedback from deployed units that trained at JMRC helps improve the training scenarios being used now. That's important, he said, because units downrange face new problems in conducting counterinsurgency operations, such as interacting with nongovernmental organizations, the ANA and the Afghan government, in performing "nonlethal" missions such as assisting in governance and development.

The atmosphere in Afghanistan is changing to where the Afghan government "has become far more respected and is the accepted form of government, rather than just the government in name," said Doneski. "It's gaining legitimacy because they are assisting the people and providing essential services."



Soldiers lift their way into 1,000 pound club

Command Sgt. Maj. Tony Winters, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, lifts his way into the 1,000 Pound Club during the U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Sports and Fitness power lifting competition, Feb. 27. Event participants were required to successfully complete three power lifting events: bench press, dead lift and squat, and reach the goal of at least 1,000 pounds for the three events combined to join the club. Five weightlifters participated, with Dustin Young, Carlos Velasquez and Stephan Seitz reaching the 1000 pound goal and Winters exceeding the 1,200-pound mark. Winters led all competitors with a total of 1,210 pounds in the competition.

Photo by Chris Cornelison

Tours uncover history of Hohenfels Training Area

by **KRISTIN BRADLEY**
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

For many Soldiers stationed at U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels, the “Box” is simply a training area, a large expanse of fields and woods where the U.S. Army trains thousands of U.S. and international troops each year.

For many Hohenfels family members, the Box is an unknown tract of land that is the setting for many stories told in answer to “How was your day honey?” and a place that occasionally swallows up their Soldier, keeping him hidden for days or weeks at a time.

Unbeknownst to most, hiding within the 40,000 acres of land under the control of the Joint Multinational Readiness Center is so much more than tank trails and mock villages. To showcase the rich history of the training area, USAG Hohenfels and JMRC have together begun offering monthly bus tours of the Box to community members, the first of which ran March 23.

“I truly believe it is good to know and appreciate history so we know what’s around us,” said Sgt. 1st Class Bryan Hammond, senior instructor at JMRC’s Observer/Controller Academy. Hammond has been studying and collecting the history of the training area since he was first stationed in Hohenfels in 1994.

“It is important to have knowledge of the people, houses and farms that were out there so we can preserve that history for future generations,” said Hammond.

To help preserve and pass on the mountain of knowledge he has acquired during his time in Hohenfels, Hammond helped organize the Box tours before he leaves Germany this summer.

The tour traces the history of the area over thousands of years, even discussing briefly its prehistoric inhabitants and ancient settlers. After the area changed hands between Germanic tribes, Celtic settlers and Roman tradesmen, the Hohenburg castle was built before 1000 A.D. near what is now the north boundary of the training area.

The tour drives to the base of the castle hill where participants are invited to hike up to the ruins and enjoy lunch while hopefully catching the excellent views that on a clear day may extend to Amberg and even all the way to the Czech border.

The five-hour tour zigzags throughout the Box taking in other historical sites such as the church of Kirchenoedenhart, built in 1543, rebuilt in 1903 and nicknamed “Halloween Church” by Soldiers who thought the caved-in roof and



Photo by Kristin Bradley

The Hohenburg Castle, one of the most stunning historical ruins in the Hohenfels Training Area, was first built before 1000 A.D. near what is now the north boundary of the training area.

colony of bats reminded them of a haunted house.

Many stops along the way are in deserted towns such as Enslwang, Schwend and Raversdorf. Some of the villages throughout the Box were deserted when the German army evacuated them when it acquired the land for training in 1937; some towns were not evacuated until 1951 when the U.S. Army expanded the training area.

Many of the quaint towns remain as they were 60 years ago. Numerous farmhouses and schoolhouses remain, grouped together in the rolling fields that are still used today for hunting and grazing. Though the structures have deteriorated, they offer a snapshot of rural Bavarian life during the first part of the 20th century.

Some of the villages have been converted into Military Operations on Urban Terrain sites, built up and

modified to resemble modern towns in Iraq and Afghanistan. The tour stops at Uebungsdorf, the largest MOUT site in the Box. Troops training at JMRC use the sites for realistic training scenarios that prepare them for their mission during deployment.

Long before MOUT sites, the Box was used in a military capacity, first as a training area for German troops before and during World War II, then as a prisoner of war camp for soldiers and noncombatants of many nationalities, most notably Polish and British. After the war ended, refugees began arriving at Hohenfels, some of them from nearby concentration camps. They were housed and treated upon their arrival, though some were too weak to survive. The very first stop on the bus tour is at a Polish cemetery where stone crosses mark the graves, many of them anonymous.

To end the tour the bus enters

Albertshof through the same winding, wooded route that American troops entered the camp in 1945, liberating 7,000 British noncombatants and 300 Americans.

Though five hours on a bus tour can only skim the surface of the history of the Hohenfels Training Area, participants said it is a fascinating history lesson in what feels like your own backyard, a unique opportunity not to be missed.

“The tour was wonderful, I had no idea that was out there,” family member Kathy McDowell said after taking part in the tour’s trial run, Feb. 23. “There is so much history concentrated on this post and the tour is really the only way to see it.”

According to Troy Darr, garrison public affairs officer, the tours will run once a month, while weather permits.

When a new tour is scheduled, the public affairs office will send a communitywide e-mail and the first 12 to respond will receive a seat. Bus tours through the Box, narrated in German, are also planned during the German American Volksfest, May 2.



Photo by Norbert Wittl

The Polish words on this simple grave marker mean the person buried here is unknown. Inside the Hohenfels Training Area is a small cemetery containing the graves of Polish refugees, many of them anonymous.



Photo by Kristin Bradley

Norbert Wittl, USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs, left, leads family members into the ruins of the Schmidheim brewery during a bus tour of the Box, Feb. 23.



Photo by Paul Boehm

A herder grazes his sheep near ruins of the Kirchenoedenhart church. Though the land inside the Hohenfels training area has long been uninhabited, the area is still used by local citizens for farming and grazing, like it was years ago before the creation of the training area forced many villagers to abandon their homes and farms.

What's Happening

Grafenwoehr/ Vilseck Briefs

Recycling Center hours

Due to Installation Management Command budget reductions, the Recycling Center will only be open on the following days effective April 1.

Tues and Thurs, from 11 a.m.–4 p.m.
Sat, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.
For more, call Barbara Bösl at DSN 476-2207 or CIV 09662/83-2207.

Easter Holiday closures

April 2 & 5 Vehicle Registration, Bldg 301, Main Post.
April 2 & 5 - All Community Bank banking centers in Germany.

“And A Child Shall Lead”

Don't miss this heroic and true story of children coming of age in Terezin, the “Jewish city” established by the Nazis near Prague as a way station before the death camps.

In the face of unspeakable horror, these children use their determination and creativity to build lives filled with hope and beauty - playing, studying, making art, and writing an underground newspaper - all at the peril of being executed.

Their actual poems and stories are woven into a fast-paced drama, evoking the universality of children caught in the insanity of war. April 1-3. Doors open at 6:30pm. Shows begin at 7 p.m. Tickets available at the door prior to show time: Adults \$7; under 18 \$5; Family ticket \$15.

Easter Egg Hunt

Bring an “Easter Basket” and the whole family for the Community Easter Egg Hunt April 3 from 2-3:45 p.m. at Grafenwoehr Elementary School. There will be age grouped Easter egg hunts and other planned activities, including opportunity to hear the story of Easter.

“Egg” Stravaganza

Free community Easter Egg Hunt, 2 p.m., April 4, at Little Mike Park on Rose Barracks, sponsored by the Vilseck Community and Spouses Club.

There will be an egg hunt, egg relay race, face painting, prizes, refreshments and pictures with the Easter Bunny for \$2 each. Older children can bring their already decorated egg for a special contest. RSVP to jenhoover1@hotmail.com. For more, visit www.vcsconline.com.

Life Unscripted! Improv Troop

Calling all improv enthusiasts and performers who are interested in joining this new program at the Performing Arts Center, Tuesdays from 6-7:15 p.m.

Outdoor Recreation

April 6: PADI Open Diver session
April 9-11: German Fishing License Class
April 18: Rapelling

Contact your local ODR for more information at DSN 475-7402 or DSN 476-2563.

Single women, trip to Vienna

Vienna is a cultural center, full of history, beautiful parks, and great shopping. Come experience this great city with other women April 9–12. Cost is 220 Euros and includes train ticket, hostel accommodations, breakfast, city bus tour and a weekend pass for local transportation. Space is limited. Passport required. Contact Laurel Hoyt no later than March 31 to sign up at laurel.hoyt@cadence.org or 0151-14991395. Sponsored by the Garrison Chaplains' Office.

Fleamarket vendors

DPW is looking for people who want to participate in a flea market in front of the Main Post PX April 22 at 10 a.m. Benches and tables will be provided at no charge, just bring the stuff you would like to sell or trade. Register by April 16.

For more, call DSN 475-6664/7144 or e-mail to Util_G@eur.army.mil or helmut.bueller@eur.army.mil

Movie extras needed

If you've ever wanted to be in a movie, here is your chance. Neue Bioskop Film is casting native English-speaking extras for a skiing/snowboarding competition movie to be filmed in Garmisch April 8 and April 19-20. There are two different scenes to be filmed on different days in April during normal duty hours.

The first is an elegant evening dinner party set in London that requires formal dress that will involve 60 extras, and the second scene is a crowd up on the Zugspitze watching a staged competition that will involve 100 extras. Army community members, military or civilian (off-duty, leave status, no uniform) or civilian 16 or older may participate and all will be compensated 45 euros (transportation also included).

If interested, send your contact information and a photo of yourself in evening attire to the production company at chalet-gapa@gmx.de.

(This film production request was cleared through the U.S. Army Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, Hollywood, and the USAG Garmisch Public Affairs Office.)

SORT Magnets available

Effective immediately, occupants in the government and government-leased housing areas listed below, can sign for their “SORT Refrigerator Magnets” from their local Self-help Store. All incoming Army Family Housing customers will be issued SORT Magnets as part of the

initial packet during check-in at housing office when they sign for quarters. The magnets will be part of the inventory just like appliances and furniture.

• Main Post:
Self Help Store, Bldg. 394.
Mon, Tues, Wed and Fri,
9 a.m.-3:45 p.m.,
Thurs, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sat, 8 a.m.–2 p.m.

• Rose Barracks:
Self Help Store, Bldg. 103.
Mon, Tues and Fri,
8 a.m.-3:45 p.m.,
Wed, 11 a.m.-3:45 p.m.,
Thurs, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., Sat.
8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
SORT (Separate Or Recycle Trash)
Pickup schedules are also available at your local Self-help Store.

Community Blood drive

There will be a Community Blood drive Wed. April 7 from 10:30 a.m.–5 p.m., at Rose Barracks' Memorial Fitness Center, sponsored by 2 SCR.

The Armed Services Blood Program only collects blood from the military community (service members, family members, retirees, and DoD Civilians) and all blood collected stays in our military community. It is truly “OUR” blood supply. To make an appointment to donate go to www.militarydonor.com.

Spring College Fair at VHS

Multiple stateside and international college representatives will be available to offer information about attending different schools April 8 from 6–9 p.m. There will be Financial Aid and High School Portfolio workshops and different scholarship opportunities. Event is open to all High School Students, Soldiers and Family members. For more, call School Liaison Transition Specialist at DSN 475-1770 or CYSS Parent Central Services at DSN 475-6656.

Hohenfels Briefs

AUSA needs you

Board members and volunteers are needed to increase membership and support of our surrounding communities.

The Association for the United States Army is a private, non-profit educational organization that supports America's Army - active, National Guard, reserve, civilians, retirees and family members. We are your voice for the Army, voice for the Soldier. There will be a membership table at the Box Run April 24.

For more, call Jeanie Anderson at CIV 09472 911262 or e-mail Firstin-Battle@ausa.org.

Month of the Military Child

- Family Bingo is April 2, 4-7 p.m. Community Activities Center, Bldg. 40.
- Parent's Night Out, a school age lock-in and a youth lock-in are April 2. Parent's Night Out provides childcare at the Child Development Center, Bldg. 111, 6:30-11:30 p.m., for \$20 per child. School age lock-in will be at School Age Center, Bldg. 112, and the youth lock-in will be at Youth Center, Bldg. 72. Lock-ins are from 7 p.m.-7 a.m. and are \$20 per child.
- A 2-kilometer Family Fun Walk is April 9 at 9 a.m.. Meet at either the CDC or SAC.
- A Family trip to Geiselwind will depart at 8 a.m. April 15 from Bldg. 10 and will return at 5 p.m. For free transportation, register at Parent Central Services.
- A Bouncy-house day for all ages will be April 16, 12-6 p.m. at the Post Gym, Bldg 88.
- Kinderfest will be April 23 2-6 p.m. at the SAC. A first run family movie will be shown April 24, 2 p.m. at the Post Theater, Bldg. 3. The movie is free to all and popcorn and drinks are free for children.

Contact Parent Central Services for additional information on all MOMC events, DSN 466-2078, CIV 09172-83-2078.

Job Shadow Day

Children grades 1-12, including home-schooled children, may participate in a Job Shadow Day April 6. Students must turn in a permission slip signed by

their parents to be excused from school on Job Shadow Day.

For more, contact the garrison's school liaison officer at DSN 466-3221, CIV 09472-83-3221.

Total Mom coming in April

This in-depth program begins April 5. and offers opportunities to explore setting and achieving personal goals, parenting tips, nutrition and fitness, improving communication and intimacy with your partner, coping with stress and much more to help you increase your confidence as a mother and woman. Limited free child care opportunities available, register quickly. Total Mom meets Mondays at Hilltop Chapel, from 9:30-11:30 a.m. beginning April 5. For more, call DSN 466-4860, CIV 09472-83-4860.

FMWR online with WebTrac

Beginning April 1, sign up for sports, recreation and CYS Services online. Pay for children's ballet lessons, sign up for a trip with outdoor recreation, book a party at the Zone, enroll in a framing class at Arts & Crafts and more all from your computer. Visit <http://webtrac.mwr.army.mil> to check it out. You must be registered in the garrison database to conduct any transactions. For more, call DSN 466-4708, CIV 09472-83-4708.

Bunco Pajama Party

Get ready to pull an all-nighter at the Zone. Bring your friends and wear pajamas for a night of Bunco April 2 from 6:30 p.m.-until the wee hours. Cost of \$20 per person pays for party snacks and more. Random drawings for prizes all night, plus prizes for “Most Losses,” “Most Wins” and “Most Buncos.” Doors open at 5:30 p.m., games begin at 6:30 p.m. For more, call DSN 466-2060, CIV 09472-83-2060.

Two Castle Tour

Join ITR April 3 on a delightful tour of two of Europe's most fascinating castles, Neuschwanstein and Hohen-schwangau. Castle entry is approximately 10 euro per castle. Bus departs Hohenfels from Outdoor Recreation, Bldg. H15, at 4:30 a.m. and returns about 9:30 p.m. The cost of \$55 per person includes transportation. Seating is limited to the first 50 people. Call to reserve your seats today. For more, call DSN 466-2060, CIV 09472-83-2060.

Fishing license course

Outdoor Recreation is offering the first German fishing license course of the year, April 7-9. Classes cover biology, legal, traditions and other host nation requirements that must be met before you obtain your German fishing license. Cost is \$75 or \$125 for families. Students must have a valid Rod and Gun Member-

ship (\$45) to take classes. For more, call DSN 466-2060, CIV 09472-83-2060.

Guys Read Book Club

The Guys Read Book Club, for boys ages 11-15, meets April 1, 3-4 p.m. and the first Thursday of every month. The April book is “The Sorceress,” by Michael Scott.

For more, call DSN 466-1740, CIV 09472-83-1740.

Book-a-librarian

Book-a-librarian appointments are available April 7 and first Wednesday of every month, for one-on-one help with AKO, research, e-mail, etc.

For more, call DSN 466-1740, CIV 09472-83-1740.

Community blood drive

The next Hohenfels Community Blood drive is April 6, from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at the Hohenfels Community Activity Center, Bldg. 40. The Armed Services Blood Program only collects blood from the military community: service members, family members, retirees, and Department of Defense civilians. All blood collected stays in our military community; it is truly our blood supply. This blood drive is sponsored by the Hohenfels Health Clinic.

For more, call DSN 466-3603, CIV 09472-83-3603.

Garmisch Briefs

FMWR Trips

Unless noted, all events meet at the Pete Burke Center. For more on any of these FMWR trips, contact the Garmisch Outdoor Recreation Alpine Experts at DSN 440-2638, CIV 08821-750-2638.

Othello

April 7: Enjoy the experience of letting William Shakespeare batter your mind with ideas with a 50-minute, non-intimidating talk on one of the greatest of the Bard's plays - the equivalent of a college lecture at any major university only without a paper due - and then watch the much-acclaimed version of the play starring Laurence Fishburne and Kenneth Branagh. Cost is \$5.

Third Reich Munich

April 9 & 11: First a video presentation and a geographical and historical orientation in the Pete Burke Center on at 7 p.m. on Friday, April 9. Then, Sunday, April 11, we catch the 8 a.m. train to Munich, recreate the Bier Hall Putsch as it happened in 1923, have lunch, and visit the site of the Munich Accords. Cost is \$35.

Everyone reads the Bavarian News



Pick up your copy today!

2010

JUNE 21 □ JULY 30

SUMMER HIRE

WHAT ARE YOU DOING THIS SUMMER?

Work in an office or outdoors with the Summer Hire Program

Employment for family members ages 14-22

Applications accepted beginning 8 a.m., March 28

For more information or to apply click on the Summer Hire link at:

<http://cpolrhp.belvoir.army.mil/eur/Select Employment>

Then, □ Summer Hire Program 2010.□

What’s Happening

Garmisch (continued)

Third Reich Munich

April 9 & 11: First a video presentation and a geographical and historical orientation in the Pete Burke Center on at 7 p.m. on Friday, April 9. Then, Sunday, April 11, we catch the 8 a.m. train to Munich, recreate the Bier Hall Putsch as it happened in 1923, have lunch, and visit the site of the Munich Accords. Cost is \$35.

Pool & Gorge

April 10: Visit the Partnachklamm, one of the most beautiful natural attractions in Germany. Hear about the 1936 Olympics in Garmisch at the ski jumping stadium, and then finish the day at the Alpspitze Wellenbad, the town’s largest swimming pool. Cost is \$22.

Munich music

April 13: Beethoven and Brahms symphony. Tickets prices for concerts or operas range from €5-100. FMWR always runs a bus to the performance for the cost of \$12, and available seats are reserved first-come, first served for those who want to spend an evening in Munich.

Amsterdam

April 15-18: Always a sold-out tour! Head via sleeper train to Holland see the Anne Frank House, tulips, Rembrandts, Vermeers and Van Goghs; take a canal boat ride, enjoy movies in English, or sit at one of the many quaint cafes. Cost is \$450 adults/\$390 children.

Brewery of the Month

April 17: Visit a monastery brewery in Weltenburg, the oldest operating brewery in the world. With its modern equipment the brewery is not only a technical jewel – but, with its Jurassic spring water and an ancient brewing recipe following the Benedictine tradition – these elements, combined in a perfect production process, emphasizes the outstanding quality of this 2008 World Cup Gold medal winning beer. Cost is \$39.

Venice

April 23-25: View great art and architecture, the pigeons in St. Mark’s Square, gondolas, good places to eat, and more. In addition, we tour Verona, the Romeo and Juliet city with the great Roman Arena and a wonderful restaurant. Cost is \$290 plus €100-200 to cover museum entrances, food, public transportation, souvenirs, etc.

Ansbach Briefs

Oriental dance

Beginning March 3, SKIES Unlimited offers a class in traditional Oriental dance, also known as “belly dancing” in the West, is a path to physical fitness and great body awareness.

The ultimate dance workout allows you to discover and appreciate your individual beauty. Cost for the class is \$40 for a month, for ages 11 and up. Classes are at the Von Steuben on Bismarck Kaserne every Wednesday from 5:30 -6:15 p.m.

Call Central Enrollment Registration Office at 09802-832533 or DSN 467-2533 to sign up.

Learn to DJ

Join the EDGE DJ Club March 8, 15, 22, and 29, as they spin at the Katterbach Teen Center from 5-7 p.m. There is no cost for those in grades 6-12. Space is limited so sign up soon.

Contact Central Enrollment Registration at 09802- 832533 or DSN 467-2533 in advance to sign up for EDGE.

Wall climbing classes

Does the weather make you feel like climbing the walls? Sign up for the EDGE wall climbing classes, March 8, 15, 22, and 29, at the Storck Physical Fitness Center.

Meet at the Katterbach Teen Center at 3:30 p.m. and return to the Katterbach Teen Center at 7 p.m. Classes are free for those in grades 6-12.

Call Central Enrollment Registration Office at 09802-832533 or DSN 467-2533 to sign up.

MWR all monthlong events

Registration for CYSS Spring Sports: baseball, softball, T-ball and bowling for ages 3-15. Fees increase after Feb. 28, so register your child at Central Enrollment today!

Java Café monthly special: Caramel Satin Coffee. Come by and taste. Military Saves Month: Need a nest egg? Stop in your local ACS for more information on this annual awareness month!

Traffic experiment

The Schweinfurt Conn East Gate is currently undergoing an experimental traffic control plan. This plan will try to increase the amount of traffic flow during the morning in the direction that the bulk of the cars are traveling (i.e. before PT

more traffic is let on post and after P.T. more traffic is let off post).

Specifically the Pond security guard will take control of the traffic light to stay green for the desired direction until a vehicle arrives at the gate to travel in the opposite direction.

Established times:

- 5:30 a.m., - 7 a.m., Monday - Friday, traffic light will favor inbound vehicles

- 7- 7:30 a.m., Monday - Friday, traffic light will operate at normal intervals
- 7:30 - 8 a.m., Monday - Friday, traffic light will favor outbound vehicles.

After 8 a.m. the traffic light will operate at normal intervals for the rest of the duty day.

This plan is temporary and will no doubt inconvenience the few drivers who need to use the gate against the flow of traffic during the specified times, but the intent is to serve the majority of people trying to get to PT in the morning and then leave afterward.

Schweinfurt Briefs

Community and contact info

For more information on the latest news, upcoming events, available services and resources, or to find the right point of contact for your concern, visit the U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt Web site at www.TeamSchweinfurt.com.

Month of the Military Child

April is the Month of the Military Child and this year’s theme is “Everyday Heroes.”

There will be many activities for kids during this month, including the grand opening of the new Youth Center in Yorktown Village, April 2 at 2 p.m. and the Kinderfest celebration on Askren Manor at the School Age Center, April 24 from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.

BOSS events

The award-winning Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program offers numerous programs monthly.

Join them April 3 on a trip to the Kreuzberg monastery. Sign up no later than April 1 or come out and bowl with BOSS April 6 and 20 at 7 p.m. at Kessler Bowling Center. The next BOSS meeting is April 13 at 2 p.m. at Finney Recreation Center.

For a complete list of upcoming events, call DSN 353-8476, CIV 09721-96-8476.

Auto Skills Classes

The Auto Skills Center offers fundamental classes on various topics. Join the “Tires defined” class, April 1, or learn about “Engine Basics” April 15, from 7-8 p.m.

All classes are free and open to ID cardholders. For more, call DSN 353-8224, CIV 09721-96-8224.

Community theatre

The Schweinfurt community theatre presents “P.S. Your Cat is Dead!” by James Kirkwood at the Abrams Entertainment Center April 1-3, and April 8-10 at 7 p.m.

This is an adult only show. Tickets are \$10. For tickets, call CIV 0162-296-2776.

Prayer Breakfast

The Schweinfurt Military Community Prayer Breakfast, “Up a Tree, Out on a Branch,” will be held April 2 from 7-8:30 a.m. at the Conn Club. The guest speaker is Chaplain (Col.) Charles Bailey, U.S. Army Europe’s command chaplain.

For more, call DSN 354-1370, CIV 09721-96-1370.

Operation Clean Sweep

Volunteers wanted. Meet at the Askren Manor commissary for this month’s Clean Sweep, April 3 at 9 a.m. Making our housing areas better places to live, is a responsibility we all share. Come help make a difference.

Easter egg hunt

The Schweinfurt Garrison invites the community to the annual Easter egg hunt, April 4, at 2:15 p.m. at Andrus

Garden, Ledward Barracks, Garrison Headquarters, Bldg. 206.

For more, call DSN 354-6186, CIV 09721-96-6186.

Easter brunch

Enjoy this year’s Easter brunch at Conn dining facility, Bldg. 20 on Conn Barracks and at Ledward dining facility, Bldg. 212 at Ledward Barracks, Sunday April 4, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Price is \$4.85 for all active duty Soldiers and civilians and \$4.20 for E4 and below spouses and dependants.

For more, call Conn dining facility at DSN 353-8261, CIV 09721-96-8261 or Ledward dining facility at DSN 354-7093, CIV 09721-96-7093.

Easter Market Trip

The Ledward Crafts Studio offers a trip to the annual Little Easter Market at the Steinberg Hotel in Wuerzburg, April 4.

Transportation is provided and departs the crafts studio at 8 a.m., returning at 6 p.m. Cost is \$5.

For more, call DSN 354-6903, CIV 09721-96-6903.

Theatre Auditions

The Schweinfurt community theatre is holding auditions for “Seussical Jr.” based on the works of Dr. Seuss, at the Abrams Entertainment Center, April 5-6 at 5 p.m.

Roles are available for youth ages 10 to 18. For more, call CIV 0162-296-2776.

Schweinfurt homeschoolers

Parents and children of the Schweinfurt homeschooling community are invited to attend monthly meetings. The next meeting is April 6, 1-3 p.m. at the Kessler Bowling Center.

This is a great way for parents and children to share ideas and meet other homeschooling families in the community.

For more, call DSN 354-6057, CIV 09721-96-6057.

Bulk trash pick-up

Bulk trash pick-up is scheduled for April 6 at Askren Manor, Yorktown Village, and government-leased housing. Place bulk items out prior to 7 a.m. on day of pick-up, but no earlier than the day before.

Bulk trash includes only those items too large to transport in your vehicle.

For more information, call CIV 09721-96-6201.

Beginner’s German class

ACS offers a beginner’s German class April 7-30. The class meets Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the ACS, Bldg. 242.

For more, call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Weight loss support group

A new weight loss support group meets every second Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. and every fourth Tuesday at noon at the Yellow Ribbon Room on Ledward Barracks.

April meetings are April 8 at 6 p.m. and April 27 at noon. This support group is open to ID cardholders ages 12 and above. WIC membership is not required. Come out, participate, pick up valuable info and receive answers to your questions.

For more, call DSN 354-6791, CIV 09721-96-6791.

New in Schweinfurt?

Schweinfurt Newcomers Awareness Program for Spouses, or SNAPS, is a five-day orientation to Schweinfurt and our military community.

The course covers German language and culture with visits to St. Joseph and Leopoldina hospitals, a walking tour of downtown Schweinfurt, lessons for using the public transportation system and a tour of local attractions.

Child care is provided. Reservations are required. The next SNAPS orientation is April 12-16.

For more, call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Youth track and field

Register now through April 15 for youth track and field, ages six to 18. Participants must have current sports physical and CYSS registration. Cost is \$46.

For more, call DSN 354-6517, CIV 09721-96-6517.

Sweet Dream Story Time


In honor of the Month of the Military Child in April, Ledward Library invites all kids to a special evening story time, April 16 at 6:30 p.m.

For more, call DSN 354-1740, CIV 09721-96-1740.

Parent’s Night Out

Register now through April 23 for Parent’s Night Out, April 30, from 6:30-11:30 p.m. Children must have current CYSS registration and immunizations at time of reservation.

For more, call DSN 354-6517, CIV 09721-96-6517.



your VOICE can make a difference

ANNOUNCING THE SURVEY OF ARMY FAMILIES VI, THE OFFICIAL SURVEY FOR ARMY SPOUSE FEEDBACK.

Army Leadership has pledged their commitment, through the Army Family Covenant, to provide quality support, services and benefits to Soldiers and Families. We need your VOICE to speak up for Spouses, Families and Soldiers. Your opinions will improve the quality of life for all!

Survey 2010 of Army Families VI


For more information, visit saf.armymwr.com

LIVE ON STAGE

April 1, 2, 3, 8, 9 & 10 at 7 p.m.

P.S. Your Cat is Dead!

by JAMES KIRKWOOD



It’s New Year’s Eve: You’ve been robbed twice, your girlfriend is leaving you and you lost your job.


P.S. Your cat is dead.

Tickets: \$10 • Adults Only

Call 0162-296-2776, buy tickets at the door or e-mail garland.travis@eur.army.mil.


COMMUNITY THEATRE

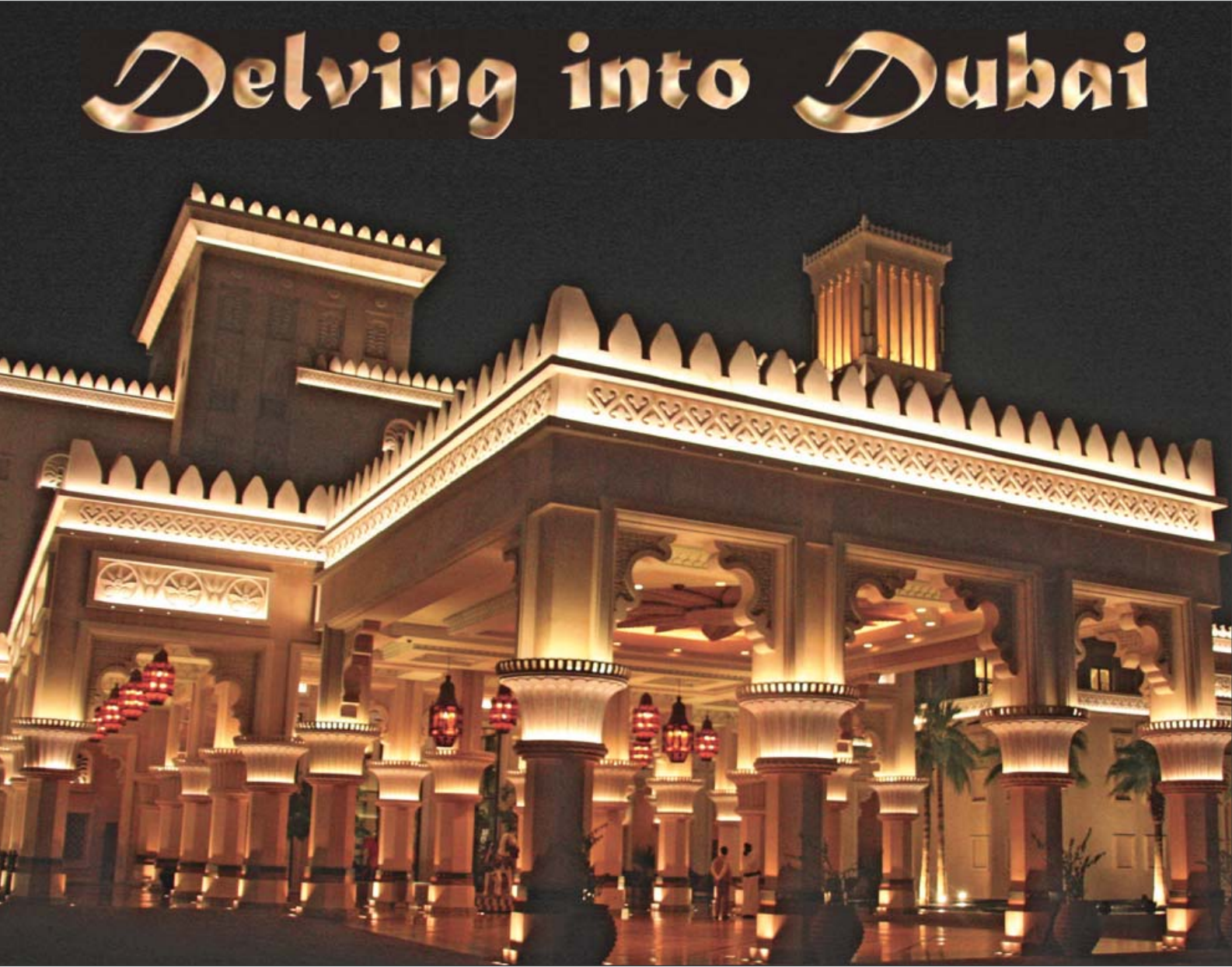
USAG SCHWEINFURT



ABRAMS

ENTERTAINMENT CENTER





Above: The Al Quasr Hotel is said to be one of the most expensive in the city. Right: The Berg al a Rab Hotel sits on the water looking ready to set sail.

This predominantly Muslim city offers visitors the flavor of the Middle East with all the comforts of an urban environment

by NICKAYLA MYERS-GARNER
Special to the Bavarian News

I have been interested in Dubai since high school when I read about the construction of the manmade Palm Islands, and when it recently opened the world’s tallest building, I decided to finally see what all the hype was about.

Dubai is located in the somewhat liberal Middle Eastern country of the United Arab Emirates, sandwiched between Saudi Arabia and Oman. When I first arrived I was amazed.

The city is full of massive construction projects and unique modern architecture. Cranes perched atop many of the skyscrapers and the entire city echoed with the sounds of building projects. Massive neighborhoods full of expensive homes sat empty. Dubai resembled Singapore in its modern feel but lacked Singapore’s cultural character and greenery. Many American restaurant chains and stores fill the malls, and English is widely spoken. Dubai felt like a modern city with a resort atmosphere – a diverse city, but local flare and flavor is drowned out by modern life.

I have traveled in several predominately Muslim countries, however, Dubai was different. As a woman, I am always careful when traveling in conservative countries. I try to wear clothing that covers my shoulders and knees. Dubai seemed to be more liberal as very cosmopolitan dressed women mixed with women who were fully covered. However, when visiting mosques I always have a scarf to cover my head. (In the Jumeirah Mosque, the only mosque in Dubai that allows nonMuslims to enter, there is a dress code.)

Dubai is a five-hour flight from Munich. Make sure to look out the airplane windows as you near the city; I could see the best views of the islands before landing at the beautiful Dubai Airport.

After settling in, I noticed party scene right away. Many clubs and bars offer a fun atmosphere and interesting clientele. Experience the open-air bar at Jumeirah Beach Hotel’s 360 bar while taking in the view of the Burj Al Arab Hotel. Treat yourself to possibly some of the most expensive cocktails you have ever had atop the Burj Al Arab, and enjoy a great view of the city. Alcohol is consumed by many and is not as restricted as in other Muslim countries. I saw many men wearing traditional clothing while sipping on a beer or cocktail.

In Dubai, the weekend begins on Thursday and ends on Saturday. Many people relax and

have brunch Friday, the Sabbath day. Sticking to the local tradition, I went to the Jumeirah Beach Hotel Beachcombers Restaurant where I sat like a house cat in the warm 70-degree sun peering at the famous Burj Al Arab Hotel. The hotel sits on the water like a massive sailboat ready to be captured in the wind and swept away to far off places in the Persian Gulf. After brunch, I took nice to walk around the hotel and marina, and observed the private yachts waiting for an adventure.

Everything seems luxurious, including the beaches with their lovely white sand and warm sun. In January, the gulf is chilly, but not uncomfortable for swimming if you keep moving. Just keep in mind that you will hear construction sounds as you try to relax and might even catch an air show as pilots practice over the sea.

One of the main things I wanted to see in Dubai was the Burj Khalifa. When it opened in January, it was deemed the world’s tallest building at 828 meters high, which is essentially double the Empire State Building’s height. When driving in Dubai, the Burj Khalifa is visible from pretty much everywhere and looks like a giant toothpick. Since the online ticketing system was not functioning and concierges were even unable to book the tickets, I had bought my ticket three days in

advance for approximately 20 euros. Had I waited till the day of, it would have cost 100 euros.

The ticket is to go to a place called “At The Top.” The tour begins with an informational area where I learned about the building and Dubai. After a short, 60-second ride to see “At the Top,” the elevator doors opened to the open-air observation deck. I immediately looked down and was surprised it didn’t appear as high as I had anticipated. As I looked around, I noticed about half of the building was still above me. What a huge disappointment!

I was informed that to go any higher than the approximately 400 meters I had gone, I would have to be a sheikh. Though it was certainly a disappointment to find that “At the Top” should really be called “In the Middle,” the views were lovely from the middle of the world’s tallest building. I was able to see the manmade islands and have a great view of the city ... just not as good of a view as the sheikhs have.

After seeing the view from the middle of the Burg Khalifa, I checked out the view from inside the Dubai Mall, which houses a huge aquarium. As you shop at Aeropostale you can look and see a shark swim by approving of your purchase. However, the Dubai Mall has

strict courtesy policies, and you will be quietly approached if you are showing your shoulders or knees and given a card with the courtesy policy listed. The policy also restricts smoking and public displays of affection.

For more shopping opportunities, Dubai also has its famous Gold and Spice souks. The Gold Souk is filled with streets of stores selling gold jewelry and coins. Coins with the Sheikh’s face are the most common. Some of the jewelry in the windows was extremely elaborate, and I couldn’t imagine anywhere you would wear them. The Spice Souk is lined with aisles upon aisles of fragrant spices. Many women shopped for the best quality spices to use when cooking for their families.

Those who want a little more action than lying on the beach and visiting shopping malls, can take an off-roading trip through the desert where you will ride up large sand dunes to quickly drop down the other side. There is also the thrill of sand boarding, much like snowboarding, but on the warm sun-soaked sand dunes.

From sandboarding to setting foot in the world’s tallest building, Dubai was a unique experience. I was able to spend time on the sandy beaches and visit the amazing manmade islands. Dubai is not a distant trip from Germany and is worth the time.



Shops sell gold coins and opulent gold jewelry at the Gold Souk.



At the Spice Souk vendors sell spices and dried herbs.



This mosque near the Gold Souk is like many throughout the city, modern and new.

Olympic ski team shares gold with Garmisch kids

by JOHN REESE

USAG Garmisch Public Affairs

Keeping a tradition that dates back more than two decades, eight members of U.S. Ski Team fresh from the Olympics did an autograph signing session for the Wonderful Wednesday skiers of Garmisch Elementary/Middle School and other members of the community, March 8.

Every winter when the team comes to town, the school arranges for its students to meet the athletes. The kids bring helmets, skis, posters and more for the athletes to autograph.

"The U.S. Ski Team racers really enjoy the kids showing up to support them," said Erica Hansen, GEMS teacher.

Racers, including gold medalist Lindsey Vonn, brought their medals and allowed the kids to see, touch and even try them on.

The Wonderful Wednesday and Super Saturday ski programs for young skier and snowboarders wrapped up earlier this month with their own downhill competition at the U.S. Hausberg Lodge in Garmisch. Super

Saturday is for children ages 3-5.

"Wonderful Wednesday is a Child Youth & School Services sports and fitness program run by Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation," explained Ellen Harris, CYSS Coordinator. "Lawrence Tindall of FMWR runs it, partnering with other CYSS programs, Outdoor Recreation, the school, business operations and the Edelweiss."

Students other than GEMS students may also participate, said Harris.

This year almost every GEMS student took advantage of the opportunity to learn skiing and snowboarding at one of the best winter sports destinations in the world. Getting to meet the U.S. Olympians was icing on the cake.

"The kids were especially excited this year as the racers just finished the Vancouver Olympics," said Hansen. "It was the most successful Olympics for the alpine racers according to medal count so the kids had better knowledge of who they are."

Meeting the students were Lindsey Vonn, Julia Mancuso, Stacey Cook, Alice McKennis, Marco Sullivan, Jimmy Cochran, Ted Ligety and Andrew Weibrecht.



Photo by Dorry Hummer

Wonderful Wednesday skiers from Garmisch Elementary/Middle School meet Olympic gold medalist Lindsey Vonn at an autograph session, March 8. Vonn is the most successful American woman skier in history. In addition to Vonn, Julia Mancuso, Stacey Cook, Alice McKennis, Marco Sullivan, Jimmy Cochran, Ted Ligety and Andrew Weibrecht also participated in the visit.

CYSS 'rocks' surprise inspection

Story and photo by

JOHN REESE

USAG Garmisch Public Affairs

The Garmisch Child, Youth and School Services underwent a surprise inspection of its facilities and came through with flying colors.

A team comprised of personnel from the Family Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Center of Expertise, IMCOM-E CYSS and the chief, Army Public Health Nursing, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, conducted a comprehensive assessment of the USAG Garmisch CYSS programs, March 9-11.

"The purpose was to validate the results of the USAG Garmisch Installation Child & Youth Evaluation Team inspection conducted August 12-25, 2009," said Ellen Harris, Garmisch CYSS coordinator.

An unannounced inspection is allowed under the Military Child Care Act and serves as the basis for fiscal year 2010 Department of Defense certification. DoD certification is CYSS's license to operate, explained Harris.

The team inspected a long list of areas at the Child Development Center, School Age Center and other facilities, checking for safety, fire safety, sanitation, food and nutrition and more. And the out briefing took place March 11, CYSS was found to be doing a fine job overall.

"Great work," praised Col. Chris Sorenson, USAG Grafenwoehr commander. "A noble accomplishment for a fantastic community — the Garmisch CYSS



Teens enjoy the early spring weather in a clean and well-lit place, March 22. The Teen Center, one of the Garmisch CYSS facilities that underwent a surprise inspection March 9-11, is the gathering point for younger population, offering a place to do homework, use a computer or enjoy a game like ping-pong.

programs are at the heart of taking care of our families and serve as a model for all garrisons."

USAG Garmisch Manager Karin Santos also expressed her satisfaction with results.

"I was happy to hear the team's assessment that this was the best — and shortest — inspection report they'd ever seen," said Santos. "I agree our CYSS team

is gold, and rocks."

The results serve to reassure the many families who trust the Garmisch CYSS personnel to care for their children, enabling them to perform their duties without the additional stress of the quality of childcare.

Harris was very pleased with the results, crediting her dedicated employees with the inspection's outcome.



Provost Marshal's Corner



Unreported lost, stolen IDs put community at risk

by Staff Sgt. TIM O'HARA

Garmisch Operations Sergeant

Losing your identification card can be a headache for you and a security issue for the U.S. Army.

The U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch Directorate of Emergency Services (MP station) has noticed an increase in lost ID cards over the last quarter.

DES also noticed that individuals who lose their ID cards wait, sometimes for several months, before reporting them lost.

The military police recommends everyone keep better track of this valuable piece of government property.

Your ID card is considered to be a prize possession in the terrorist community.

Consider this scenario: You lose your ID card, do not report it right away, and the next week it was found to have been used to gain access to your installation by a known terrorist.

Keep track of your card. If you find an ID, or if your card is lost, stolen or expired, contact the military police immediately, and help us continue to keep your community safe.



Kwajalein bound

FMWR director Steve Gauthier and U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch Manager Karin Santos share a laugh after she presented him with an Army Achievement Medal for his service in Garmisch.

Known for his irascible sense of humor, Gauthier accepted an assignment to Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands in the South Pacific. Moving to the other side the planet is a dramatic change from the Alps of Garmisch and his former duty stations around Germany, but Gauthier is looking forward to his new job in the tropics.

Coincidentally, a piece of German history is at Kwajalein — the World War II cruiser Prinz Eugen, considered a "lucky ship" by her crew; it survived the war and two nuclear bomb tests before capsizing in the lagoon. The ship now functions as an unforgettable dive site. Additionally, a few members of the Garmisch community were previously stationed on the remote scrap of land.

Photo by John Reese

Weekend acute care a hot topic at AFAP

Story and photo by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR.

Bavarian News

"If momma ain't happy, no one is happy," said Michele Schuh, Ansbach garrison Army Family Action Plan coordinator, at the conclusion of the 2010 AFAP conference.

With the top three issues for 2010 in Ansbach identification cards for surviving children, weekend acute care clinic and certified medical record translation outside the continental United States, proves that AFAP is an important integrated mechanism of the Army.

At the conference discussion topics include consumer services, medical and dental care, force support and employment, mobilization and deployment, and youth, family readiness and education issues. The Ansbach garrison wrapped up its 2010 Army Family Action Plan, March 19, with some very compelling and complex issues, Schuh said.

"With AFAP, you have a voice to tell command what is not working and what to fix, which is essentially its role," Schuh said.

With a consensus of shaping local and global Army communities this year, Schuh said, the community can take action and make changes.

"You have change, now shape it into what you want it to be. We want



Sarah Amos, Michele Schuh and Crystal Slingerland tally the votes at the conclusion of the 2010 Ansbach Garrison AFAP conference, March 19.

you to have a say in what makes life good for you."

She said AFAP is bigger than ever and has a much broader scope.

"To better the Army you live in today, you have to better the whole

Army. Look bigger and further down the road than just fixing a pot hole — look at the total Army," she said.

And AFAP works.

Rethinking and restructuring the way business is conducted is important

for Soldiers' productivity and the family unit.

Ansbach AFAP members agreed.

"This is very passionate for me because we have to take care of our Army families, especially when

we (Soldiers) are deployed," said Staff Sgt. Ward Messervy, delegate spokesperson for the Force Support and Employment work group and third-time AFAP member for the Ansbach garrison.

"When we are deployed, it is good to know that families will be safe and have the necessities they need to be taken care of. When families are cared for, that relieves some stress," he added.

Messervy and his team worked on the number one and very complex issue of the survivor children identification cards procedure in Europe versus that in the U.S., and which identification card they should retain.

He said if the parent remarries an active duty service member, these children have to make a decision on which identification card they will choose to keep when they come to Germany — the survivor benefit card or the card of the active duty parent.

"We are talking about surviving children here — their parent gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country," said Messervy, "and they need to be taken care of up to their legal age."

Schuh feels strongly about this issue's importance.

"I really hope this issue will go to Department of the Army AFAP," said Schuh. "Why would you make a child decide on giving up something this important?"

Community spirit soars during Spring Fling

Story and photo by
Sgt. ANNA K. PERRY

12th Combat Aviation Brigade

KATTERBACH, Germany — Unit and community spirit raged like a wildfire at the annual Spring Fling Bazaar, March 12-14. Families, Soldiers and leaders from U.S. Army Garrison-Ansbach and 12th Combat Aviation Brigade converged for three days of socializing amid fantastic shopping and delicious food — all

conveniently located in neighboring hangars on Katterbach Kaserne.

The Ansbach and Illesheim Spouses and Civilians clubs joined forces to bring the bazaar to fruition.

"Our intent is to bring the community together as one," said Tonya Dunn, president of ISCC. "Any funds that are raised will go right back into the community in the form of scholarships and donations to organizations like Girl Scouts of America, Boy Scouts of America and Bright

Eyes, an organization that helps pay for a child's first pair of glasses. At the end of the day, this is all about community."

Dunn said this is the first year both communities joined to host the event versus holding separate bazaars.

Dunn and ASCC president Kimberly Emerson cut the ribbon at the bazaar's grand-opening ceremony. Col. Christopher Hickey, USAG-Ansbach commander, and Lt. Col. Bryan Hoff, 12th CAB rear detachment commander, sliced a special Spring Fling Bazaar cake.

"It's really gratifying to see so many volunteers from both communities come together and make this happen," Hickey said, before jokingly encouraging the audience to go spend lots of money. The commander said he intended to make purchases as well, as a way to support the community.

More than 30 vendors from across Europe presented innumerable treasures. Shoppers browsed through ornaments, paintings, jewelry, furniture and specialty wines and cheeses. Many

spouses also sold handmade crafts like soaps and hair accessories.

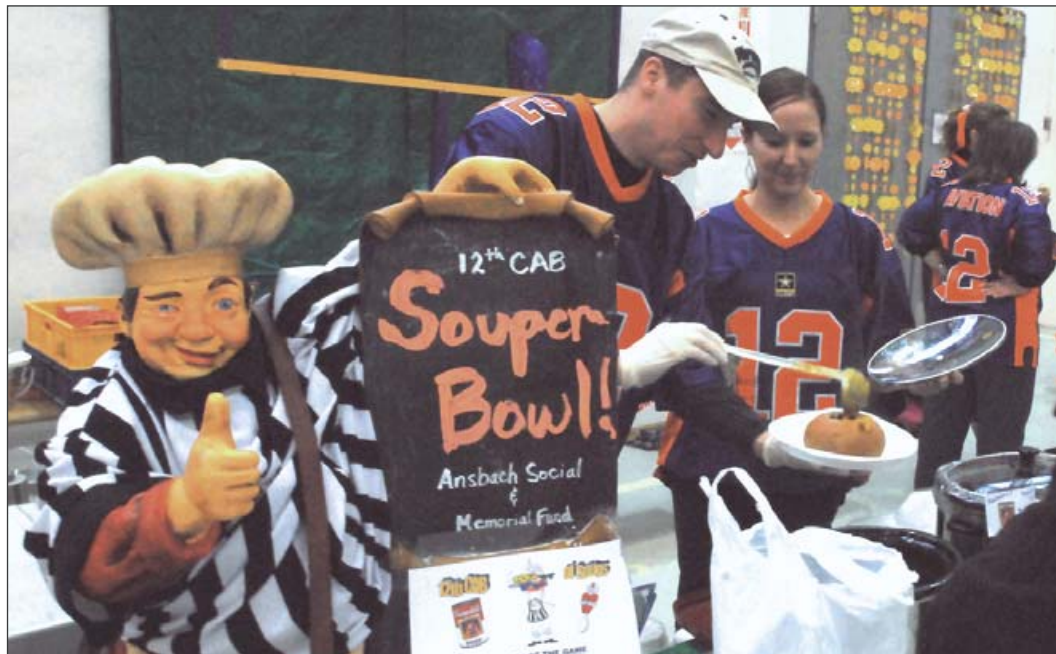
Family readiness groups offered food to satisfy every appetite from themed booths designed and constructed by the individual FRGs. Patrons enjoyed homemade spring rolls from the 412th Aviation Support Battalion Spring Dragon booth and got a pick-me-up from the 2-159th Aviation Regiment Bistro and Coffee Bar booth. The 3rd and 5th of the 158th Avn. Regt. also kept stomachs full.

"It's as if people are walking down Main Street. It feels like everybody just opened their back doors, and we're just neighbors across the fences," Tammy Doerer said of the FRG booths. Doerer is FRG leader for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 12th CAB, and the wife of Col. Robert Doerer, 12th CAB forward commander.

Doerer's FRG set the standard for spirit with its Touch Down Soup Zone. Spouses, company leadership and troops proudly sported 12th CAB team jerseys as they dished up soup and bread bowls for their customers.

Headquarters spouses also had a baked goods stand — Oreo balls made by Debbie Stephens were a hot-ticket item that flew off the table. Stephens, wife of 1st Sgt. Marde Stephens, had to replenish the supply due to high demand.

"Many people could say this is just too much trouble — can't do it because of the dollar, the weather, the deployment. But look at the spirit, look at the energy. You can tell that people put their heart and soul into this. This is what the Army is about. This is what 12th CAB is about," Doerer said.



Capt. Justin Izzo, HHC rear detachment commander, assisted by Sgt. Jessica Martell, dishes out soup at the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade Family Readiness Group food booth, the Touch Down Soup Zone, during the Spring Fling Bazaar on Katterbach Kaserne, March 12-14.

Candles, while romantic, can be a safety hazard

by **DAVID L. ZIPF**
USAG Ansbach Safety

Joe Smith planned the perfect evening. He prepared a scrumptious meal with all the details closely examined and employed. He lit three candles to add to the mood. The appetizers were light and tasty, and the wine was ever so sweet with great ambrosia. Soft music played in the background

as he talked about irrelevant matters with his special dinner guest. All in all, it was an exceptional dinner. After his guest left, Smith retired to bed, comforted by the lasting impression of a simply enjoyable evening.

But while he slept, he started to get a nagging feeling that he had forgotten to do something, something important. He began to fret but rolled over in an attempt to rid himself of that ever increasing uneasiness. But something new enters his dream: panic. His mind begs him to wake up.

He can't seem to get a full breath of air and starts coughing. His eyes start to water.

Finally, he wakes up to find a bedroom full of ... fog? ... no, smoke! He gets out of bed only to trip on his shoes. His head hits the dresser and he falls ...

Later, after the fire trucks, ambulances and police cars have left, an emergency medical technician who lived down the street is heard talking quietly to a fire inspector.

"I don't think he ever knew what happened," the EMT said. "Looks like he woke up and stumbled against the dresser and the smoke did him in."

"Yeah, I think you're right," the fire inspector said. "You know, we preach all the time about leaving fires unattended, about turning off appliances, just using some plain old common sense. It looked like he had a nice dinner party planned with a friend. And he didn't take the time to do one simple little thing ... and it cost him."

Composited Risk Management is a common-sense approach put into a checklist format. If our dinner friend had employed CRM, he would have discovered he had made a critical error in his evening plans.

His error? Leaving candles unchecked and forgetting to extinguish them.

Candles are romantic and can play an important role in creating a relaxing atmosphere. Our friend missed the obvious which is, while beautiful, fire is always dangerous.

Unattended, abandoned or

inadequately controlled candles account for 37 percent of all candle fires. Additionally, 19 percent of candle fires occurred because some form of combustible material was left too close to the candle.

To keep a tragedy like Smith's from happening in your home (many candles are lit in bedrooms and bathrooms besides using for dinners), always stay in proximity to the candles and when you leave the room, extinguish the flame.

Keep combustible/flammable materials away from candles, place candles in proper holders and ensure they are in a place where they cannot be easily knocked over).

Simple common sense, safety sense equals common sense. Don't leave home without it and always

employ it in an area you and your loved ones call home.



I. A.M. Strong tour dazzles Schweinfurt

by **EVA BERGMANN**
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

Recording artist Leigh Jones and other performers from the I. A.M. Strong Tour performed at U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt, March 18, at the Conn Community Conference Center. Nearly 300 people packed the conference center, many of whom traveled great distances to attend the concert and the meet and greet earlier that day.

Jones, hip-hop band Animate Objects, select comedians, and Soldier performers for the Army's I. A.M. Strong campaign to combat sexual assault and harassment among Soldiers and military family members.

By joining the tour, Jones not only promoted its message, but also followed her own family tradition of military entertainment. Following the footsteps of her grandfather, who played in a military band, and her parents, who once toured Europe with USO, she felt it was her turn to perform for Soldiers and family members.

"I am happy to be able do something for these brave men and women, who do so much for us. I am very proud to be part of the I. A.M Strong Tour," Jones said.

"I hope many more celebrities will be performing on tours for the military," she said. "I think there's no better way to use your popularity than for a good cause and I can't imagine anyone more deserving than our



Photo by Nathan Van Schaik

Recording artist Leigh Jones, who performed for the Schweinfurt community, March 18, is seen here sharing an autograph with Staff Sgt. Harry Matazza of the 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery, during a meet and greet earlier that afternoon at the Ledward dining facility. The hip-hop band Animate Objects, select comedians and Soldier performers united for the Army's I. A.M. Strong campaign to combat sexual assaults and harassment among Soldiers and military family members.

military members and families."

Maggie Vagle, a member of the hip-hop band Animate Objects, emphasized how impressed she was by the Soldiers and family members she met during the tour.

"It has been wonderful to go to all these different installations and meeting the Soldiers. These are probably the most polite people I have ever met," Vagle said.

Besides her great admiration

for Soldiers and family members mastering the challenges of military life, Lakeisha Taylor, background singer for Leigh Jones during this tour and former contestant of American Idol, was especially touched by the I.

A.M. Strong message.

"I have been performing for years, but having this message and purpose behind the tour, makes it a different way of performing for me," Taylor said.

"You can feel our message, and how important it is, because it affects all of us, not just the Soldiers, also civilians, just everybody," she said.

Taylor also commented on the Soldiers who toured with the group and performed a rap song and a poem.

"They are really bringing this message across to the audience and we have learned so much from them during our tour. They are absolutely incredible," Taylor said.

The tour's musicians and comedians were accompanied by Sgt. Anthony Profit, vice president of Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers in Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and Sgt. Danny Bullock, president of BOSS in Ansbach, Germany.

After researching the Army's Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) program along with incident reports connected to the program, Profit pulled facts from these reports to create a spoken word act, including a poem, which illustrated examples of how sexual assault can happen and how it affects the victims.

Bullock performed a rap song he wrote, which raised awareness about the prevention of sexual assault and harassment among Soldiers and military family members.

Hazardous material training promotes safety, economic benefits

Story and photo by **EVA BERGMANN**
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

In November 2009, 11 dining facility workers on Conn Barracks were sent to the hospital after bleach was inadvertently mixed with another cleaning agent, affecting the respiratory passages of all those exposed. Potential hazardous materials surround us and can be created quickly, often accidentally.

So how do you handle hazardous materials? Where do you go with hazardous waste or who can you ask about that? If you

are looking for answers to such questions, your first point of contact is highly likely your unit's environmental officer.

The garrison's environmental division regularly offers environmental officer training, giving unit environmental officers the skills needed to manage hazardous materials and wastes, while providing them with a broad understanding of environmental protection issues affecting their garrison. The Final Governing Standards (FGS) and Army Europe Regulation 200-1 create the framework for the class upon which the technical content is built.



Ralph Metz, fire inspector of the Schweinfurt Fire and Emergency Services, shows Spc. Sam Ly of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery how to extinguish a fire hazard quickly and safely. The strong practical focus of the environmental officer training includes several field trips, allowing the participants to explore facilities in their own community and providing various opportunities for Soldiers to practice in hands-on exercises.

The FGS is the agreement between the host nation's authorities and the environmental branch of the Department of Defense as to what rules U.S. Soldiers will follow while located in that host nation country. These rules may vary between duty stations.

Due to PCS moves and personnel changes within units, there's a frequent need for Soldiers to participate in the environmental officer training, explained David Cooper, training instructor.

Cooper, who has taught these trainings since 2003, has a master's degree in urban water and environmental management and over 15 years of experience working with hazardous materials. Specialized in adult education, he particularly highlights the strong practical focus of his class. Furthermore, by combining theoretical lectures with video examples or hands-on exercises, Soldiers can directly relate the information to their jobs within their respective unit.

Additional field trips allow the participants to explore facilities in their own community.

"I really liked how the course mixes different teaching techniques," said 1st Lt. Robyn Kersey, a chemical officer with the 12th Chemical Company. "It is reading and then applying what we've learned to practical exercises. We also go out into the community and actually see how things work in the real environment."

Although the environmental officer training, according to Kersey, can be a good "brush up" on previous education, it is mainly geared toward Soldiers who are just starting to work with hazardous materials and most of the information is common-sense based and easy to apply.

See HAZARDS, page 19

Saving is elementary



Courtesy photo

(From left) Second-grader Caeley Brown, fourth-grader Elwan Bowens, fifth-grader Tyrique Cross, third-grader Allison Medina and fourth-grader Taelor Duncan of Schweinfurt Elementary School all earned \$100 savings bonds for their winning essays and drawings, March 11, at the elementary school.

The contest, which asked students how they would manage \$100, was part of the Military Saves Week campaign, a collaborative effort among Community Bank, Andrew's Federal Credit Union and Army Community Service Financial Readiness Program manager Darryl Jones to teach kids about the importance of saving money. Schweinfurt Middle School participants also received savings bonds.

Schweinfurt community focuses on local women in history

by **YULANDA REYNOLDS**
USAG Schweinfurt Federal Women's Program

In honor of the National Women's History Month in March, U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt proudly takes the opportunity to recognize and honor women who are valuable members of our community.

Christine Willis
Born in Hof, in Upper Franconia, just six miles away from the then German/Czech Republic border, Christine Willis came to Schweinfurt after college in 1976. Because of her fluency in the English language, Willis was



Willis

able to secure her first job as a quality assurance specialist in the transportation office where she



Lamson

worked for about four years.

When asked about how women's roles have changed over the years, Willis points out the reality of increased presence in politics and in television, and greater protection of women's rights and privileges.

Willis is a librarian at the Schweinfurt library, where she has been an invaluable employee and part of the Schweinfurt team for the past 30 years.

Patricia Lamson
Patricia Lamson was born in Mankato, Minnesota, and moved to Germany in August 1989. Roughly 10 years later, she moved to

Schweinfurt and began working in the MWR marketing department.

After a year in marketing, she began her career with Army Community Service. Her time there would span a decade, from 1999 to 2009, where she worked in Employment Readiness and later in Deployment Readiness, becoming the Mobilization and Deployment Readiness manager.

Lamson continues to serve the community as the MWR partnership specialist where she oversees the Child, Youth, and School-Aged Services, Edge and Hired programs, and facilitates partnerships with other MWR programs.

Soldier remembered for his positivity



VanMeter known for his initiative and enforcing standards

Story and photos by
NATHAN VAN SCHAIK
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

Beyond the chest full of badges, the collection of medals, and his impressive

track record, Staff Sgt. Daniel J. VanMeter will forever be remembered for his selflessness and his positive outlook on life as a Soldier, husband, father and friend.

“He was a great father, wonderful son and an excellent NCO. He was more than a squad leader. He was a mentor to all. Sergeant VanMeter was a very approachable and proud NCO,” said Spc. Danny Bradshaw, VanMeter’s dear friend and a Soldier in the 1st



A memorial ceremony was held at the Ledward Chapel, March 16, to honor Staff Sgt. Daniel J. VanMeter, a member of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, who died in his home in Geldersheim, March 8.

Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment.

“He was someone who was liked by all of the NCOs in the company and was well-known throughout the battalion,” said Staff Sgt. Nickolas Comey of 1-2nd Inf. Regt.

A memorial ceremony was held at the Ledward Chapel, March 16, to honor VanMeter, a member of the 1-2nd Inf. Regt., who died in his home in Geldersheim, March 8.

VanMeter, once a member of the

Old Guard, had a positive impact on all who crossed paths with him. Each of his comrades shared their memories.

“We all knew him for moving out and taking fire,” reminisced Capt. Nicholas Seidel, commander, C Co., 1-2nd Inf. Regt. “And that’s why he will never really be gone; because he is a part of each one of us ... the Soldier that runs on initiative, thrives on challenge, enforces standards, hard-as-nails, steely eyed, and yet stoically reserved. Who

will be the next Staff Sgt. VanMeter?”

Lt. Col. Steve Miska, commander, 1-2nd Inf. Regt., illustrated how VanMeter truly possessed the ability to shed a positive light on any situation, no matter how tense. “That’s just the type of guy he was,” Miska said.

VanMeter is survived by his wife Sunshine; two children, Derek and Savanna; mother Linda Lee Rose; and sisters, Hannah Lee Rose and Laura Lee VanMeter.

Murch embodies platoon leader mentality

Story and photo by
Pfc. MICHAEL SWORD
Task Force Bayonet Public Affairs

LOGAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan – In the Army, change happens all the time. Whether it’s uniforms, weapons or the food at the dining facility, nothing is more inevitable than change. For the Soldiers of the 2nd Platoon, Troop C, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, this week marks one of their biggest changes yet.

1st Lt. Jose Burgos has been the platoon leader for the 2nd Platoon for 18 months, since the unit returned to its home station after the 173rd’s last deployment to Afghanistan.

“When I came to the unit, I got a bunch of brand new guys, it was a brand new platoon,” Burgos recalled. “My platoon sergeant and I built up this platoon and we’ve become a family, we’ve become very close.”

“We do everything together,” he said. “You become real close and they become not only good Soldiers, but also good friends.”

1st Lt. Colin Murch will be taking over for Burgos this week and plans to quickly integrate himself into the platoon.

“The challenge is learning all the guys in my platoon, learning what their strengths and weaknesses are,” said Murch. “And getting to know each one of them as an individual and building those relationships.”

That, however, is just the beginning of the long road ahead for a new platoon leader Burgos said.

“Initially, the most difficult part is trying to work with your



First Lt. Colin Murch, left, and 1st Lt. Jose Burgos, both of 2nd Platoon, Troop C, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, talk to a Malik village elder after delivering school supplies for the village’s children.

counterparts, the ANA,” he said. “Since we’ve been here we’ve had two different Afghan National Army platoons and it’s hard to adjust to their way of doing things, and for them to adjust to the way we’re doing things since we were a new unit.”

“Also, learning the area, learning the people, meeting the village elders, trying to build the relationships that we need in order to

continue progress and follow the counter insurgency fight,” he said.

Despite the challenges ahead, Murch is excited for his opportunity to have what he calls the best job in the Army for a lieutenant.

“Taking over in a combat zone has its challenges, but it’s also a great opportunity and it’s something that, when you’re a lieutenant, you want to do,” he said. “First Lt. Burgos, along with his squad leaders, has done a great job and set me up for success.”

After working side-by-side with Murch for the last week, Burgos is confident in his replacement.

“I think he’s doing very well,” said Burgos. “He’s got a good attitude, he’s willing to learn, willing to take direction and I think he’s going to do great.”

“He’s a good fit for the platoon,” he added.

Capt. John Williams, commander of C Troop, agreed.

“He’s got a very outgoing and positive attitude,” said Williams. “When I met him, I thought this would be the perfect guy because that’s what you need to have to talk with the elders.”

Losing a platoon leader is always hard for a commander. However, Williams has faith that although he’s losing the experienced Burgos, Murch will quickly assume the lead of 2nd Platoon and continue providing security and building relationships with his Soldiers, village elders and the residents of Kherwar district.

“The biggest thing here in Kherwar is relationships,” said Williams. “It’s a population-centric counter insurgency and normally it’s the platoon leaders that are the manifestation of that. I think it’s going work out well.”

Environmental hazards often household items gone to waste

Continued from page 18

“The class made me aware to potential mistakes and safety risks and how to correct or avoid them,” said Spc. Gregory Benjamin, a welder of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment. “For example, you shouldn’t use a Gatorade bottle to store antifreeze. The next thing you know, someone comes by, wanting to drink some Gatorade. That just has trouble written all over it. So you want to make sure, everything is labeled correctly.”

The training was originally designed for Soldiers working in motor pools, maintenance bays and such, yet the subject is also relevant for

various other jobs, since hazardous materials can be found almost everywhere.

“It doesn’t take much, just some cleaning products in a storage room or in an office, if used incorrectly. Many cleaning products are – even if not toxic – at least irritating if you have skin contact or breath in the vapor,” Cooper said. Cooper also mentioned that Army Europe Regulation 200-1 requires every unit to have at least one environmental officer.

Besides the obvious environmental and safety reasons, ensuring hazardous materials are handled properly and reducing hazardous waste is also financially beneficial.

“Probably the key waste to prevent is expired materials and it is very easy to do that,” Cooper said. “When you order new materials, put them in the back (on the shelf) and bring the older stuff forward. Another factor is making sure to use a can of paint until it is empty. I know it sounds obvious, but doing that already does a lot,” Cooper said, also emphasizing the importance of preventing cross-contamination.

Cooper said disposing of hazardous waste costs roughly ten times as much as nonhazardous waste, so preventing contamination of regular waste by hazardous wastes can save a lot of money.

Participants of the 40-hour course might also

acquire promotion points by completing the environmental officer training.

“The environmental officers are not meant to be experts,” Cooper said. “Of course, after one week of training, no one expects them to be, but they are supposed to be facilitators. They need to know, if there’s a problem and how to work at it, if they can fix it easier themselves and if not, know who to call,” he said.

Soldiers interested in taking the training should contact the environmental division at DSN 354-6795, CIV 09721-96-6795. Classes may also be available at nearby surrounding garrisons or online.

Mild TBI symptoms have multiple causes

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUNDS, Md. – Concussion is the most common traumatic brain injury, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The signs of concussion, clinically known as mild traumatic brain injury or mTBI, are variable and can be subtle. A person may have a loss of consciousness and amnesia, or may only feel like “you got your bell rung” or see stars and feel dazed with no other symptoms.

March is Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Month. Medical experts want people to know as much as possible about the injury and to seek help if needed. Experts say because concussions can present in so many different ways, they are as difficult to detect on the battlefield as they are on the football field.

TBI occurs when a blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury disrupts the function of the brain. Traumatic brain injuries are most commonly caused by falls, motor vehicle crashes, being struck by/against something, and assaults. Blasts are the leading cause of TBI for active duty military personnel in war. The severity of a TBI may range from “mild” (in other words, a brief change in mental status or consciousness) to “severe” (an extended period of unconsciousness or amnesia after the injury).

“Soldiers are asked at medical screenings if they have been involved in a blast, for example, and will

answer, ‘No,’” said Dr. Maria Crane, Europe Regional Medical Command’s TBI director.

“When asked in a different way, we often discover that although they may not have been caught directly in a blast, they were certainly close enough to an explosion – or two or three – to have been affected.”

The Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center indicates that 33 percent of patients who needed medical evaluation for battle-related injuries at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in 2008 had traumatic brain injury. The percentage breakdown for the Army is as follows:

- Mild, 89 percent
- Moderate, 5 percent
- Severe, 3 percent
- Penetrating, 3 percent

Not all blows or jolts to the head result in a TBI. It is possible to be exposed to blast and have no injury. However, Soldiers who are exposed to blasts or any possible cause of concussion should seek care as soon as possible after the injury.

Early medical intervention is key to making an accurate diagnosis and initiating treatment. This is particularly important during military operations because multiple concussions within a short period, before the brain has had time to recover from the last injury, can cause more severe deterioration than might have occurred with a single injury.

What’s important to know, Crane said, is that if there is a marked change

in behavior or functioning between life before exposure to a blast and after, there is a good reason to seek treatment. She added that whenever such is the case, Soldiers should seek help whenever they come to recognize they might need assistance with this treatable injury.

The primary treatment for concussions includes protection from sustaining a second injury before the brain heals, education about what concussion is and what to expect during recovery, and reassurance.

For people diagnosed with a mild traumatic brain injury, the following general tips can aid in recovery:

- Get lots of rest. Don’t rush back to daily activities such as work, training or vigorous sports activity, as these can make symptoms worse. Recovery from concussions can take several weeks.
- Avoid doing anything that could cause another blow or jolt to the head.
- Ask your healthcare provider when it’s safe to drive a car, ride a bike or use heavy equipment, because your ability to react may be slower after a brain injury.
- Take only the drugs your healthcare provider has approved, and don’t drink alcohol until your doctor says it’s OK.

For more information about traumatic brain injury, schedule an appointment with your primary care manager or to seek direct help visit



Courtesy photo

A typical computed tomography scan of the human brain.

these Web sites:

http://ermc.amedd.army.mil/Observances/MentalHealth/MH_Resources.html
www.armymedicine.army.mil/news/

releases/20090225FAQtbi.cfm

www.pdhealth.mil/TBI.asp

Editor’s Note: Europe Regional Medical Command Public Affairs Office contributed reporting.

America’s most valuable resource is its children

by Col. THERESA S. GONZALES

Commander, Bavaria Dental Activity

Maltreatment of children by their parents or primary caregivers has been with us for a very long time. Family violence can be traced back to biblical times. Extreme parental punishment has been recognized as a serious problem that demands intervention only relatively recently. While several court cases in the United States in the 19th century dramatized the plight of abused children (largely through the actions of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, or SPCA) and established legal and social precedents for intervention on behalf of maltreated children, widespread public recognition of child abuse did not occur until 1962.

That year Dr. Henry Kempe published a landmark article entitled the “battered child syndrome” and drew national attention to the abuse of children. Perhaps, no single publication has had such a profound effect on the welfare of children. Since that time, we have implemented a variety of concepts and laws to combat this societal problem.

By 1966, all fifty states had passed legislation regulating child abuse, all of which mandated reporting. By 1986, every state but one required reporting of neglect, and forty-one states made explicit reference to reporting of emotional or psychological abuse. Initially, mandated reporting was limited to health care providers but this was eventually extended to include teachers, nurses, counselors and the general public.

Child abuse as a social concept continues to evolve as children’s rights are recognized by society. How we define “abuse” has a great impact upon our recognition of it. Child abuse is defined as the nonaccidental, physical, emotional or sexual trauma; exploitation; or neglect that is endured by a child younger than 18 years of age while under the care of a responsible person, such as a parent, sibling, teacher or other person acting in loco parentis. Approximately 3 million cases of child abuse are reported annually in the United States. Of these, 2,000-4,000 cases will result in death. Childhood homicide rates have more than doubled over the past 25 years, and there is no indication that this trend is abating. Since so many cases



Gonzales

of abuse culminate in a fatality, it is important to recognize the clinical indicators of abuse.

The face and the mouth in particular are frequent targets of abuse. Easy access to the child’s head as well as the mouth’s role in communication and nutrition make it particularly susceptible to abuse. Abusive trauma to the face and mouth include all the following:

- Laceration of the lips or adjacent soft tissues, resulting from either being forcefully struck or forced feeding.
- Repeated fractures or loosening of the anterior teeth.
- Facial bone and nose fractures.
- Scarring of the corners of the mouth
- Soft and hard palate bruises.

Abuse represents a spectrum of behavior. It is repetitive in nature and fatal abuse is often preceded by minor manifestations of maltreatment, which might be overlooked by physicians, dentists, teachers, social workers and others who are in frequent contact with the child. The sad truth is that child abuse kills more children in the United States each year than do accidental falls, drowning, choking on food, suffocation and fires in the home combined.

Children should never die because of our inability to confront the possibility of abuse. Health care providers must identify children at risk, educate the families we serve and report suspected cases of abuse and neglect to the appropriate authorities. Our lack of understanding of the complex etiology of child abuse does not absolve our collective responsibility to protect those individuals at risk. As Dr. Henry Kempe so eloquently stated almost 34 years ago, “It is just not possible to worry about all of the children all of the time. There lies the frustration and total inaction as well. For each of us there must be only one child at a time.”

Reporting suspected abuse: Military personnel and families have avenues to report within their communities. Each branch of service has outlined a similar method for reporting. All installations have a telephone reporting system for handling all reports of child abuse to include abuse that occurs in a DOD-operated or sanctioned activity for children. In most cases, the central reporting location will be the military treatment facility emergency room or military police desk. The reporting point of contact (RPOC) will be available to the military community on and off the installation 24 hours a day.

Bavaria Family Advocacy Directory

- | |
|--|
| Grafenwoehr |
| Family Advocacy (call Vilseck) |
| 476-2650 |
| Hohenfels |
| Family Advocacy / Social Work Supervisor |
| 466-4625 |
| Illesheim |
| ACS main office & Family Advocacy |
| 467-4764/4555 |
| Katterbach |
| Family Advocacy director |
| 467-2516 |
| Schweinfurt |
| Family Advocacy |
| 354-7064 |
| Vilseck |
| Family Advocacy Program |
| 476-3217 |

No symptoms for STDs doesn’t equal a clean bill of health

by LINDSAY TRUAX and AVIANCE BETTS

Illesheim Health Clinic

Did you know that one in five Americans has a sexually transmitted disease?

Sexually transmitted diseases are a major community health issue in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it is estimated there are 19 million new STD infections each year. Two-thirds of the new cases are among young people aged 15 to 24 years old.

The most commonly diagnosed sexually transmitted diseases in the world today include: chlamydia, human papilloma virus, gonorrhea, trichomoniasis, genital herpes, HIV/AIDS, syphilis and hepatitis B and C.

The most frequently reported of these are chlamydia and gonorrhea. In 2008, more than one million cases of chlamydia and approximately 300,000 cases of gonorrhea were reported to the CDC. Both of these are more prevalent among women versus men, along with

being more recurrent in 15 to 19-year-olds.

Often people assume someone does not have a sexually transmitted disease because they “look clean.” This is a common misconception because many times people that are infected with an STD do not experience any symptoms.

Between 50-75 percent of those infected with chlamydia experience no symptoms at all. This is why it is referred to as the “silent” disease. Furthermore, many STDs are able to spread from person to person before symptoms appear.

The majority of sexually transmitted diseases cannot be prevented through vaccination. Currently, the only STDs that can be prevented through vaccination are hepatitis B and HPV.



Undiagnosed and untreated sexually transmitted diseases can lead to short-term and long-term health concerns. Sexually transmitted diseases can cause complications such as epididymitis in men and pelvic inflammatory disease in women, both of which can lead to infertility. An

estimated 24,000 women become infertile each year because of STD infections.

Women who are considering pregnancy or are currently pregnant should be tested for an STD because of the harmful impact they can have on a developing baby. This includes possible miscarriage, stillbirth and birth defects to the developing baby. Furthermore, sexually active individuals with an STD are

more susceptible to contracting HIV, or human immunodeficiency virus.

The CDC recommends that females under the age of 25 be routinely tested for sexually transmitted diseases once a year, along with those older than 25 who have risk factors such as new or multiple sex partners. Condoms – if used correctly and consistently – can protect against many sexually transmitted diseases. Condoms provide a resistant barrier to particles the size of STD pathogens. However, condoms only provide protection against the areas they cover. If open sores are not covered when the condom is in place, no protection is being provided.

If you have further questions or concerns, make an appointment at your local health clinic or at Tricare online at www.tricareonline.com. You can also contact your community health nurse for more information. If you have questions regarding your hepatitis B or HPV vaccination status, contact your local immunization nurse.

For more, visit the CDC Web site at www.cdc.gov.

Costner draws hundreds to field house

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When he announced the title of his first song, “Find that girl,” a member of the audience enthusiastically shouted “I’m right here.”

Hiding his smirk, Kevin began to sing the original tune, tapping his boot to the rhythm as he strummed his guitar.

The band joined in, singing along, and together they told stories of small American towns and broken dreams.

Although many fans were surprised the award-winning movie star was now a touring musician, many were actually impressed by his music.

“He has a really relaxed sound,” said Spc. Chris Shy, 8th Medical Logistics Company who drove more than 400 kilometers from his station in Miesau, Germany, to meet the superstar. “I think a lot of actors try to become musicians, but (Costner) has talent. He can rock.”

Costner’s musical transition was enough for Pfc. Anthony Payne to immortalize his interaction with the entertainer in the form of a tattoo, stating Costner’s signature would become a permanent fixture on this left arm.

For Payne, a Soldier with the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment and a tattoo artist, meeting Costner was something he would not soon forget.

As Costner held a red sharpie near Payne’s skin, he tilted his head and asked, “Are you sure?”

Payne nodded.

(For the record, Payne arrived at the concert a few hours later having personally tattooed Costner’s John Hancock on his already brightly colored, musically themed left arm.) Costner’s signature joined the ranks of Hank Williams, Johnny Cash and Waylon Jennings on Payne’s tattooed music arm of fame.

“It’s all part of a collection,” said Payne.

It is not uncommon for actors to try their hands in the music world. Top stars like Johnny Depp, Kevin Bacon, Billy Bob Thornton and Bruce Willis



Kevin Costner signs an autograph for 7-year-old Drew Griswold during a meet and greet at the USO, March 20. More than 200 Soldiers and family members lined up to meet Costner before he and his band performed a free concert at the Main Post Field House later that night.

have recorded albums and launched into the music business.

But for Costner, being a musician and a movie star go hand-in-hand.

“I don’t try to separate my movies from my music,” said Costner in an interview after the meet and greet session. “A lot of the songs that we’ll sing tonight are songs that came while I was making those movies.”

Whether he’s telling three-minute stories or three-hour stories, Costner dazzles his audience with raw, down-home talent.

“I’m very American,” said Costner. “Let’s face it, you know, I make cowboy movies. My songs and the songs of the band really reflect America.”

Costner explained he, too, was far from home and felt comfort in seeing the American flag wave over the Grafenwoehr community. After playing to a European audience for the past two months, Costner said he was excited to be playing for fellow Americans.

“It’s going to be a taste of home,” said Costner.

The enthusiasm of the day spilled over into the night as more than 500 community members packed the Main Post Field House for the free concert.

For more than an hour, Kevin Costner and Modern West rocked the crowd. Costner surrounded himself with talented and passionate musicians, but often stole the limelight

with his charisma. He danced around stage singing and playing and the audience ate it up. And, like his debut movie role, Costner delivered the big chill.

One fan sauntered through the crowd wearing a homemade shirt that read: “If you build it, they will come,” while another lucky fan got a chance to show off her dance moves on stage with Costner.

As the night ended, Costner again expressed his gratitude to the men and women of the armed forces and shared words of encouragement.

“I have played warriors but I never forget I’m not one,” said Costner to the crowd. “I believe in American and I believe in you. So I thank you.”

Palmer says key is motivation

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for the USAREUR competition. Fourteen were ultimately selected, and two commissioned officers from that group were chosen to go on to competition at the Army level. Of the approximately 30,000 officers from across the Army eligible to compete, Cormier added, 40 advanced to Armywide competition and 25 were chosen as MacArthur recipients.

Palmer said he’s a bit overwhelmed by the honor, and gave credit for the award to the members of his company.

“I consider myself fortunate to be counted among such fine leaders, although if not for the Soldiers, this recognition would not be happening,” he said.

The captain, who calls northeast Georgia home, expanded on that theme at the time of his USAREUR award last month.

“Motivation is really the key of all leadership, because if you have a motivated force they can accomplish anything,” he said. “You tell (your Soldiers) to follow you to the gates of hell and they’ll beat you to the top of the hill. So it just depends if your guys want to be there or not. If you take care of them, they’ll want to be there and you’ll want to be there, because it’s just fun.”

The MacArthur Award was introduced in 1987 and is presented annually to company-grade and junior warrant officers who demonstrate MacArthur’s ideals of “duty, honor and country” and have proven records of performance, leadership and achievement.

Tricare aligned with health care bill

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE
News Release

WASHINGTON – The Tricare military health plan meets the standards set by the health care reform bill the House of Representatives passed March 21, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said.

Calling their health and well-being his highest priority, Gates reassured service members and their families that the legislation won’t have a negative effect on Tricare, which “already meets the bill’s quality and minimum benefit standards.” “This was clarified by a vote in the U.S. House of Representatives (March 20), and is expected to be reaffirmed by the Senate,” Gates said in the statement.

“The president and I are committed to seeing that our troops, retirees and their families will continue to receive the best quality health care,” the secretary said.

Do you have an idea for a story?

Contact the *Bavarian News* at DSN 475-7113 / 7775, CIV 09641-83-7113/7775, or e-mail jeremy.buddemeier@eur.army.mil and trecia.wilson@eur.army.mil. We want to hear from you!

NSPS to transition 220,000 employees to GS

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paid a salary that exceeds Step 10 – the highest step under the GS system – of their pay grade will retain their pay upon conversion, James explained.

An employee’s grade upon conversion will be determined by classification specialists using the same criteria in use for GS employees, James said. “An employee’s position will be evaluated under the General Schedule system and classified,” he said. “If that position classifies out as a GS-13, then that employee will become a 13 when they transition.”

While the Defense Department has a goal for transition completion, James noted that each organization and component will make a determination on a timeline based on four factors:

- No undue interruption to mission or hardship to employees;
- Established processes to classify NSPS positions into the appropriate non-NSPS system;
- Existence of a legacy performance management system; and
- An information technology system capable of handling the transition.

As officials work to ensure a smooth transition, they also are turning an eye to the road ahead. Along with terminating NSPS, the act gives the Defense Department new authorities to look at developing a successor performance management system that incorporates the best practices of NSPS and GS.

“One of the best advantages under NSPS that we saw was the clear alignment between employees and the organization about what their contribution means to the priorities and the direction of the organization,” James said. “As we develop the new authorities and transition employees to the GS system, in most cases, we plan to reinforce that directive and that effort to ensure the employees are aligned with the organization.”

Officials also will examine the law’s requirements for hiring flexibilities and a personnel performance fund that rewards employees or teams for their performance, he said.

These processes will continue to be open and transparent, James vowed.

“I envision the transition and development and use of the new authorities to be a collaborative effort

with supervisors, management, leadership, union partners, labor partners, the Office of Personnel Management and other stakeholders. I see this as being an entirely inclusive process.”

James emphasized the importance of communication throughout the transition process and future personnel system modifications. “You can’t overcommunicate a change,” he said.

To that end, the NSPS Web site, www.cpmc.osd.mil/nsps, now includes transition updates and a training module called GS 101, he said.

“Employees who have never been in the GS system, and there are a few, can go in and walk through that,” James said. “It really is informative and tells them how the GS system works.” It’s also of value to employees who were in the system before, he added.

James encouraged employees to continue to ask questions. “Employees should feel free to ask their chain of command about how that process is being implemented,” he said. “GS is very prescriptive in how the process works. They will be informed how their job will be classified and transitioned.”



Photo by C. Todd Lopez

Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Brundage, left, and Sgt. 1st Class Paula L. Lebov work together during the first official “master resilience training” program Nov. 8-19, in Philadelphia, Pa.

Survey ‘imbues Army-Strong values’ while also determining Soldiers’ resilience

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Victory University there. For now, the course will continue to run parallel at both campuses, until enough MRT teachers can be trained.

“Ultimately we will be doing this 150 people at a time at Fort Jackson,” Cornum said.

With 622 Master Resilience Trainers already certified, the end-game plan is to have every drill and platoon sergeant qualified as MRTs. Short-term, Cornum said, the goal of

one MRT per battalion in the Army will be achieved by the end of this fiscal year.

“It’s a deliberate way to imbue the force with those Army-strong values,” she explained.

DA civilians and military family members are not being left out of this comprehensive approach – versions of both the GAT and the MRT program have been created for those supporting Soldiers, and will be implemented in the near future.